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ACT THE

SCENE I.

IR HARRY PORTLAND

Enter CLARA *and* MF

Cla. We ll, my dear *Melissa*, woman!

Mel. I ha ve no d Mr Osborne has eager to gain the ing her capri her follies? cere; yet hi cacy that ma ple's compli

Cla. If t should we

not be offended at the
you?
lara, there is no danger;
earth more capable of ma-
another, it is Mr Osborne.
sy in you, my dear, to hold
I have no doubt but you
fter marriage,
tainly die in that faith.
Harry, I believe, is of your

endship of Mr Osborne and
the commencement of it
u ever heard their story?
ny acquaintance with your
but I hope you will not
se when I assure you that,
if interested in its happiness.
you are sincere—I know it
en, I'll tell you.—Harry and
be both abroad at the same
was going to Italy, and passing
ntainous part of Savoy, we came to
ong the rocks, surrounded by trees,
on a sudden, at a turning in the
borne and his servants attacked
eady to sink under their wounds.
y alone? (*Alarmed.*)
o servants, and the
aped from his car-
stols, and flew to

patants, and
fired, that he
l two of the
who had dis-
rry's peo-

ple running to the attack, and levelling their pieces, fled.

Cla. Thank you for that, my dear—you have given me breath.

Mel. The intrepidity with which Sir Harry saw Osborne defend himself, and the fortitude he discovered when he was informed, as it was at first believed, that his wounds were mortal, attached my brother so powerfully to him, that he resolved not to leave him in the hands of strangers, but anxiously waited while he was under cure.

Cla. This was a noble generosity!

Mel. It was; and Osborne was so sensible of it, that, though he was going the other way, he would return with Sir Harry into Italy; and their friendship has continued ever since.

Cla. But is it not strange, my dear, that he cannot detach his friend Sir Harry from the *gaming-table?*

Mel. My brother is infatuated—It is his greatest, almost his only weakness.

Cla. But the report is, that Mr Osborne takes advantage of this weakness; that while he publicly satirizes the practice, he privately benefits by his superior address, and, in fact, has half ruined Sir Harry himself.

Mel. The report of malice, my dear.

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND *and* MR OSBORNE.

Sir Har. Ladies, your obedient—Pray, when did you arrive in town, madam? (*To* CLARA.)

Cla. Yesterday—But how came you to quit Bath so suddenly, gentlemen? I understood you intended to stay another week, and you were gone before me.

Sir Har. Mr Osborne, madam, was *horriblement ennuyé*—dull as an alderman at church, or a fat lap-dog after dinner—thinking on marriage, Melissa, and other momentous matters; and so——

Osb. Come, come, Sir Harry, this is mighty ingenious; but you were at least as willing to be gone as myself—The truth, madam, is, my *modest* friend here heard *you* were to set off in a day or two, and from that moment was continually giving hints, and asking me how I, as a lover, could exist so long without a sight of my mistress; and, in short, began, all at once, to talk so sympathetically about absence and ages, that I, who had made the excursion purely to oblige him, was, I acknowledge, exceedingly happy to find I could oblige him by returning.

Cla. What say you to this, Sir Harry?—But I know your politeness—you will confess it all to be true, and begin to say civil things upon the subject, that will only put me to the trouble of blushing and curtseying; so we'll suppose them all, if you please—But come, tell me—what's the news of the day?

Mel. News! Oh, that's true—Look here, my dear!—I thought I had something to tell you—(*Reads a paragraph in a newspaper.*)—"We hear, from very good authority, that a hymeneal treaty is concluded between a certain beautiful ward, not a mile from St James's Square, and her old guardian; and that the lady is expected in town from Bath every hour, to sign and seal."

Sir Har. What say *you* to this, madam?

Cla. Say! I protest I don't know what to say!—except that these news-makers are a very pleasant, ingenious kind of people.

Mel. But a'n't you angry?

Cla. Angry! no, indeed. I am sure I am very much obliged to them for thinking of me—I shall be so stared at—I'll go into public continually, and my guardian shall go with me.

Mel. But is there any foundation for this report, my dear?

Cla. Nay, I am sure I can't tell: there may be, for aught I know—I have suspected the matter a great

while, you must know, by my guardian's simpering and squeezing my hand so often—then he is continually talking about Methuselah and the Antediluvians, and making systems, to convince me how much stronger and longer-lived some men are than others —He read, the other day, in the Annual Register, of a man, at Inverness, who lived to the age of one hundred and seventeen; and he has been talking ever since of purchasing a country seat in the Highlands.

Sir Har. That would be pleasant.

Cla. Very—Then we should have a flock of goats, I suppose!

Sir Har. Dorastus and Faunia.

Cla. Oh yes—quite in the Damon and Philida way.

Osb. You are very happy in a lover, madam.

Cla. Exceedingly—quite proud of my conquests—There is no such great miracle in bringing a young fellow, whose passions are all afloat, to die at one's feet—The thing's so natural, that one does it every day—But to thaw the icy blood of a grave old gentleman, to see him simper, sigh, dance minuets, and look ridiculous for one—Oh! there is, positively, no flattery equal to it.

Sir Har. He will make your winter evenings in the Highlands quite entertaining, with relating the wild pranks he committed, and the deeds of prowess he was guilty of in his youth—then you will be so delighted with listening to his raptures, and tasting his panada, and——

Cla. Oh yes—yes, yes—ha, ha—I—I think I see him now, with his venerable bald head, his shrivelled face, and his little pug nose, that looks as red and as bright as the best Dutch sealing-wax, rising from his chair, by the help of his crutch-headed stick, to breathe forth vows of love and everlasting fidelity—Ha, ha, ha!

Mel. It's whimsical enough.

Cla. Yes—Oh, now you talk of whimsical, I was accosted by an old gentleman, the night before I left Bath, in the rooms, who was the drollest being, and had the most agreeable kind of whimsicallity about him, I ever met with—I thought he would have made love to me—swore I was an angel, and said a thousand civil things—quite gallant.

Osb. Oh, madam, the old men are the only polite men of this age.

Cla. Upon my word, I begin to think so.

Osb. The young ones, taught in the modern school, hold a rude familiarity to be the first principle of good breeding.

Cla. Manners, like point ruffles, are now most fashionable when they are soiled.

Sir Har. No, no—they only hang the easier for being deprived of starch—But who was this old gentleman, pray, madam?

Cla. A relation of yours, sir.

Sir Har. Of mine, madam?

Cla. I should suppose so, for he mentioned his nephew, Sir Harry Portland.

Mel. Our uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong.

Sir Har. It is—I found a letter from him when I came to town, in which he informed me he should arrive in Bath the very day we left it.

Enter Servant.

Sir Har. Who brought this?

Serv. It came by the post, sir. [*Exit Servant.*

(SIR HARRY *reads the letter, and seems surprised.*)

Cla. I die to be better acquainted with him—I must have him in my train of sighing swains.

Osb. You seem astonished, Sir Harry.

Cla. Some unkind billet from his mistress, I suppose.

Sir Har. No, indeed; it is the most unaccounta-

ble epistle I ever received, and from my unaccountable uncle too—There, read, read. (*To* OSBORNE.)

Osb. (*Reads.*)—"Dear Harry—You know, you dog, how your old uncle loves you—You will say so, when you are thoroughly acquainted with the occasion of this—In brief—I met with a young lady at Bath, the most extraordinary, take her all together, I ever beheld—She is a nonpareil! a phœnix!—But you will judge for yourself—She is coming up to town with her brother, who, by the by, is a country booby—but that's no matter—I saw her only once, and that was in the rooms; but once is sufficient—They intended coming up to London by way of seeing the town, for they are country people I find, though the sister has more accomplishments, ease, and good-breeding, than I ever yet saw in the drawing-room—I proposed a match to the brother, and he seemed happy at the offer—They will arrive nearly as soon as this, for they set out before it; and I shall follow, maugre the gout, as fast as I can,

HORNET ARMSTRONG.

"P. S. I forgot to mention their name is Turnbull."—*Turnbull!* Why, what, in the devil's name, is Sir Hornet mad!

Sir Har. In one of his right ancient whims, I suppose—Sir Hornet has had many such in his time.

Mel. But pray, who is this miraculous lady, Mr Osborne? for you seem to know something of her.

Osb. Do you remember, Sir Harry, a gawky girl, that stalked round the rooms, and stared prodigiously—she that was stuck to the side of a bob-wig'd country 'squire?

Cla. Oh!—what, the—the wench with her arms dangling, her chin projecting, and her mouth open—dressed in the—red ribband, tawdry style, and that looked as if she were afraid of being lost?

Sir Har. Yes—or as if she durst not trust herself

alone out of her own parish, lest somebody should catch her, put her in a sack, and send her for a present to the king of the cannibals.

Osb. The same; that is the accomplished Miss Turnbull.

Sir Har. How!

Osb. That is the easy, well-bred, drawing-room lady.

Sir Har. Is it possible?

Cla. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! well—(*With an affected gravity*)—and I don't doubt but she would make a sort of a—a—a very good wife—Understands the arts of brewing, baking, pickling of pork, curing of hung beef, darning of stockings, and other branches of housewifery in perfection.

Sir Har. Oh, no doubt.—Is perfectly skilled too in the science of feeding the pigs.

Cla. Yes; and will make her own and her husband's linen, and do all the needle-work and quilting at home—Believes in ghosts; and has got the wandering Prince of Troy, the Babes in the Wood, and the entertaining Dialogue of Death and the Lady by heart.

Osb. Such, and so numerous, are the wife-like properties of Miss Barbara Turnbull.

Cla. Turnbull, too!—Well, that is such a delightful name for a country lady—so pastoral!

Osb. The father was one of the greatest graziers in the west of England, and was so intent on getting money, that he bred his children in the most stupid ignorance. He is lately dead; and the son has commenced gentleman and 'squire, by virtue of the father's industry, and a pack of fox-hounds; and though he has scarce knowledge enough of articulate sounds to hold a dialogue with his own geese, yet does he esteem himself a devilish shrewd fellow, and a wit. His conversation is vociferous, and patched up of proverbs and out-of-the-way sayings, which

he strings together without order or connection, and utters upon all occasions and in all companies, without respect to time, place, or person.

Cla. Well, well, Sir Harry, I shall have to wish you joy soon, I suppose. But I must be gone. Fifty visits to make this morning. Time flies; but agreeable company, and all that, you know. Oh, Sir Harry, you mean to attend the spring meetings this year, at Newmarket? I am told you understand the turf. I think of sending a venture of five hundred by somebody. But I shall see you often enough before then. Adieu. [*Exeunt* CLARA *and* MELISSA.

[*Manent* SIR HARRY *and* OSBORNE.

Sir Har. Well, what do you think of this lady, Osborne?

Osb. I think her a very amiable, accomplished lady, and one that, under an assumed levity, observes and understands every thing about her.

Sir Har. I am entirely of your opinion. If I may judge from an acquaintance of such short date, she is the first woman in the world.

Osb. Except one, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. You, Osborne, may make exceptions, if you please; I am not so captious. She has beauty without vanity, virtue without prudery, fashion without affectation, wit without malice, gaiety without coquetry, humour——

Osb. Hold, hold! stop to breathe. How was it? Vinegar without acid, fire without heat, light without shade, motion without matter, and a likeness without a feature.

Sir Har. Spite, by the gods! proud spite and burning envy.

Osb. But did you observe her Newmarket hint, Sir Harry, and the concealed significance with which it was delivered?

Sir Har. I did.

Osb. Which, being faithfully done into English, bears this interpretation:—"I, Clara Forrester, a beautiful, elegant, sensible girl, with a fine fortune, should like to take you, Harry Portland, with youth, spirit, and certain *et ceteras*, but"——

Sir Har. But that I am afraid of indulging a partiality for any man who is so intolerably addicted to gaming. Is not that the conclusion of your speech?

Osb. Oh fie! no, no: Gaming! That man has a body without a soul, that never felt an inclination to gaming.

Sir Har. Perhaps so; but that man has the greatest soul who can best resist that inclination.

Osb. Pshaw!—Gaming is the essence of fashion, and one of your strongest recommendations. Clara is a girl of spirit; and what girl, that comes under that description, would ever place her affections on a sneaking, sober, prudent, fellow—a mechanical scoundrel, that knows the day of the month, sips tea, keeps a pew in the parish church, writes memorandums, and goes to bed at eleven o'clock? Poh! absurd!

Sir Har. Curse me, Osborne, if I know what to make of you: you are a riddle that I cannot expound. You have such an awkward way of praising gaming, that it always has the appearance of satire.

Osb. Satire! how so? Do you think I'd satirize myself? Who sports more freely than I do?

Sir Har. Why, there's the mystery. You are as eager, to the full, as I am. If I set an hundred on a back hand, you offer a thousand; nay, had I the fortune of a nabob, and were to stake it all, you would be the first man to cry covered, and be damned mad if any one wanted to go a guinea. Not because you have not generosity, but in the true and inveterate spirit of gaming.

Osb. Certainly. Gaming! why gaming is the best sal volatile for the spleen: it rouses the spirits, agi-

tates the blood, quickens the pulse, and puts the whole nervous system in a continual vibration. No man ever yet died of an apoplexy that loved a box and dice.

Sir Har. But they have died as suddenly.

Osb. Oh! ay, ay; but that's a fashionable disease, an influenza; that's to make your exit with *eclat;* that's to go out of the world with a good report.

Sir Har. True, true; and indeed as to a few years more or less, that is, in reality, a mighty insignificant circumstance.

Osb. *A bagatelle!*—Let us live while we do live, and die when we cannot live any longer.

Sir Har. That's my comfort, that's my comfort.—Yes, yes, a pistol, a pistol is a very certain remedy for the cholic! Nobody but a pitiful scoundrel would go sighing, and whining, and teazing other people with his griefs and complaints. When a man is weary, what should he do but go to sleep?

Osb. To be sure. Life itself is but a dream.—'Tis only sleeping a little sounder.

Sir Har. What, live to be pitied! Ha, ha! A decayed gentleman! No, no, no. A withered branch!—a firelock without a flint! And yet—heigho!—this Clara—damn it, it's provoking.—Youth, beauty, affability! She's a bewitching girl!

Osb. She is indeed.

Sir Har. A lovely girl!

Osb. Ay, enough so to make any man, that might hope to be in her favour, in love with life.

Sir Har. Any man, any man but me—no, no—undone, undone, undone!

Osb. Well, but, seriously, since you have such bad success, why don't you renounce play?

Sir Har. 'Tis too late: I have sunk eighty thousand; my resources almost all exhausted; my estates all mortgaged to Jews and scoundrels.

Osb. All!

Sir Har. All, except the estate in Kent.

Osb. Well, then, if you cannot content yourself with your present loss, your best way will be to make another vigorous push.

Sir Har. That's exactly what I am determined to do; and unless the devil possesses the dice, I think I may expect, without a miracle, that fortune should change hands.

Osb. One would think so, indeed. Will you dine then at my house? There will be the chevalier, the baron, and the usual set. They have engaged to dine with me. They are spirited fellows, and will play for any sum.

Sir Har. I don't know. Suspicion is a curs'd meanness; and yet I cannot help having my doubts of some among that company. Nay, had you not so often assured me you were perfectly acquainted with them all——

Osb. Why, I tell you again and again, so I am.—I will be answerable for their conduct; and that's more than I would say for any other set of gamblers upon earth.

Sir Har. Well, well, I'll meet you there.

Osb. We dine early—at five.

Sir Har. Agreed.

Osb. And then—hey for a light heart and a heavy purse. [*Exit* OSBORNE.

Sir Har. No, no—no light heart for me.—I am sunk, degraded in my own opinion. Gaming alters our very nature. Osborne used to hate it. He was then an open-hearted, generous fellow. He now appears to have contracted an insatiable love for money, and a violent desire to win—he cares not of whom; of me as soon as another. Were I in his situation, and he in mine, I think I should find an aversion to increase his distress.—He knows mine, yet has no such aversion. Perhaps he thinks my ruin certain, and that he may as well profit by it as ano-

ther. I know him to have the most refined and strictest sense of honour. I have lost most of my money to him, and in his company, and therefore have not been duped out of it.—That is some comfort, however. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter MR OSBORNE *and* TIMID.

Osb. Well, Mr Timid, has Sir Harry sent to you for a further supply?

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir, yes; and a very large supply too.—He wants 5000*l.* immediately. Lack-a-day! I asked him how he thought it possible for me to raise such sums as he called upon me for every day; reminded him what a bad way his affairs were in; and what an usurious rate I was obliged to borrow all this money at.

Osb. What said he?

Tim. Lack-a-day! not much: seemed chagrined; said it must have an end, one way or another, soon; and demanded whether I could or could not raise the money. Lack-a-day! I told him I was no longer master of ways and means; and he said, then he must positively employ another prime minister, for supplies he must have.

Osb. Why did you tell him that? Go to him; inform him you have met with a tender-hearted Jew, who knows nothing of the situation of his affairs, that will lend him 10,000*l.* directly, if he wants it.

Tim. Ten thousand! On what terms?

Osb. Oh! the mortgage of the Kentish estate.

Tim. The Kentish estate! Lack-a-day! but suppose he should go to gaming, and lose it to somebody else instead of you?

Osb. Oh, I'll take care of that.

Tim. Lack-a-day! it must not be Benjamin Solomons who lends this?

Osb. True; no:—humph—Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam.

Tim. (*Writes in a pocket-book.*) "Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam." Lack-a-day!

Osb. Well, go you to him, and inform him that the money shall be ready in about half an hour.

Tim. Lack-a-day! good young gentleman! Heaven pardon me; I had like to have said, damn the dice. You'll be a true friend?

Osb. Be under no apprehensions.—This old fool is become suspicious: I must be sudden. (*Aside.*)

Tim. Had not we better inform him of all, before he goes any further?

Osb. By no means: leave that to me.

Tim. Lack-a-day! Well, the remembrance of a good deed is grateful on a death-bed.

Osb. Do you be expeditious. I'll instruct the Jew, and he shall meet you here. [*Exit* OSBORNE.

Tim. Heaven pardon me! I had like to have said, damn the Jews. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

Sir HARRY *and* MELISSA.

Sir Har. Heavens! what romance! I can scarce believe my eyes! Did you ever hear of so strange an affair?

Mel. Strange! it's miraculous!—Quixotism!—And our good uncle is the prince of madmen!

Sir Har. To send a foolish, illiterate, country dowdy and her block-headed brother a visiting on such an errand! What can I say to them? I declare I don't know how to behave; never was so embarrassed in my life. Where are they?

Mel. He has made an acquaintance with the groom, and is gone to the Mews, which seems to be his proper element, to examine the horses; and I left her with my woman, staring, like a Dutch doll, at every thing she fixed her eyes on. Here she comes.

Enter MISS TURNBULL.

Miss Turn. My gracious! Here be a power of vine—(*Staring about.*) I wonder if that be he that be to be my husband.—(*Aside.*)

Sir Har. I hope, madam, the fatigue of your journey has not injured your health.

Miss Turn. Zir!

Sir Har. I hope you are pretty well after your journey.

Miss Turn. Pretty well, thank you, zir.—Iveck, he's a handsome man. (*Aside.*)

Mel. This is the oddest affair.

Sir Har. I don't know what to say to her—I am afraid, Miss Turnbull, you wont find the town so agreeable as the Elysian fields of Somersetshire.

Miss Turn. Lisian vields!—There be no zuch vields in our parts—There be only corn vields and hay vields.

Mel. My brother, madam, means to say, you are not so well pleased with the town as with the country, perhaps.

Miss Turn. Oh!—Yes, but I be though, and ten times better—(*They stand silent some time.*) Pray, miss, when did you see Zekel Turnbull, my uncle?

Mel. I have not the honour to know him.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—What, don't you know Zekel?

Mel. No, indeed!

Miss Turn. Why, he do come to London zity vour times every year.

Sir Har. Is he in parliament?

Miss Turn. Parliament?

Sir Har. Yes.

Miss Turn. What, a parliament-man?

Sir Har. Yes.

Miss Turn. No; he be a grazier.—(*Silent again.*) Pray, miss, have you been to zee the lions and the wax-work to-day?

Mel. To-day!

Miss Turn. Ees.

Mel. I never saw them in my life.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—What, never zaw the kings, and the queens, and the tom-stones?

Mel. No.

Miss Turn. Merciful vather!—Well, let's go and zee 'em now then.

Mel. People of fashion never go to those kind of places.

Miss Turn. Never!

Mel. Never.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—But I am zure I will go every day while I be in London zity, if I can vind the way.—Pray be this vair-time here—Where be all those volk gwain—and where do they all come fro'?

(SQUIRE TURNBULL *without.*)

Barbara—Barbara—Where bist, Barbara?

Miss Turn. I be here.

Enter Squire.

Sq. Well, Zir Harry, here we be—Madam, your zervant—I zupped wi' Zir Hornet three nights ago, an a zaid you be a vine lass—What though—I had never zeen you, but I gave yo', miss, in a bumper; an Zir Hornet swore, that, except Barbara, a didn't knaw one to match you.

Mel. He did me great honour.

Sq. Why, to be zure a did—What though—a was wrong—I zee a was wrong—Barbara is well enough—But what though—the greatest calf isn't always the sweetest veal—Vor all the length of her spurs, she won't do pitted against this vine ginger pullet.

Mel. Your compliments quite over-power me, sir.

Sq. Compliments—No, no—What though—vather be dead, an' I ha' three thousand a-year, and the best pack of vox dogs in Zomerzetzhire—I a no need make compliments—I would as zoon over-ride the hounds or vell oak zaplings vor vire wood—Barbara, mayhap, understands zic things; her reads Kademy o' Compliments—vor my part, I a' no time vor zic trash.

Miss Turn. I'm zure it be a very pretty book.

Sq. Hold thy tongue, Barbara, an' then nobody will knaw thee bist a vool—Look ye me, miss—I do want a wife—an' I should like hugely vor you an I to zet our horses together, as the zaying is.

Mel. Sir—I don't understand—

Sq. Vor my part, I am none of your hawf-bred ones—What though—shilly shally and no thank you are always hungry—A lame tongue gets nothing, and the last wooer wins the maid—A bad hound may start a hare, but a good one will catch her.

Sir Har. I believe, sir, you never saw my sister before.

Sq. Why, no, to be zure—What though—Love and a red nose can't be hid—If you cut up the goose, I'll eat it—The hare starts when the hound least expects it.

Sir Har. Very true, sir—But here is a disagreeable misunderstanding—

Sq. Why, to be zure—I do knaw it—We misunderstand the thing parfitly well—it be very disagreeable, an' I be glad of it—I a brought Barbara to London to zee the lions, buy ribbands, an' be married—But what though—liking's liking, an' love's love—myzelf bevore my zister—If the mountain won't go to the man, the man mun go to the mountain—an vaint heart never won vair lady.

Sir Har. Don't you think, sir, that were my sister's affections totally disengaged, this abruptness were very unlikely to gain them? Is it not too violent, think you, for female delicacy?

Sq. Why, to be zure—vemale delicacy!—I hate it—and as vor your abruptness, why, gi' me the man that speaks bolt outright—I am vor none o' your abruptness—What though—he must a' leave to speak that can't hold his tongue.

Mel. Your proverb is quite à-propos, sir.

Sq. Why, to be zure—dogs bark as they are bred.

Sir Har. } Ha! ha! ha!
Mel. }

Sq. I am a staunch hound, miss, and seldom at vault; an' zo, wi your leave, I'll—

(*Offers to kiss* MELISSA.)

Mel. I beg, sir——

Sq. Nay, don't be bashful—I like fruit too well to play long at bobcherry—a's a vool indeed that can't carve a plumb-pudding—

(*Offers to kiss again, and is prevented by* SIR HARRY.)

Sir Har. I am sorry to be obliged to inform you that you are entirely mistaken, both with respect to the affections of my sister and myself. As a friend of my uncle's, sir, I shall be happy to shew you every respect, but nothing farther can possibly take place between the families.

Enter a Servant. (*Delivers a card to* MELISSA.)
Exit MELISSA.

Serv. Mr Timid desired me to tell you, sir, that Mr Levi is quite tired of waiting, and says, if you can't come now, he will call again to-morrow.

Sir Har. Oh, tell him he must not go—I beg Mr. Levi's pardon; I'll be with him in a minute. (*Exit Servant.*)—Sir Hornet has been exceedingly precipitate in this business, sir—He is coming to town, and must apologize for his error—As to my sister, I have no doubt but she has every respect for your merits they deserve; but her affections are pre-engaged, the nuptials fixed, and are soon to be celebrated—While you remain in town, however, I beg you will command my house and services. (*Exit* SIR HARRY, *bowing.*)

Sq. Well, Barbara, what dost think on un?

Miss Turn. Why, a be well enough—but I daun't rightly knaw what a means.

Sq. What a means—thee bist a vool—thee dust

na knaw the London tongue, thee means—A zaid, in a kind of round-about way, that it's all right.

Miss Turn. Did a?

Sq. Did a—why, to be zure a did—didst na zee how zivil a were, an what a low bow a made—But thee has no contagion in thee—thee will never learn what's what.

Miss Turn. Why, where be I to learn zic things—I a never been no where.

Sq. Never been no where—well—what o' that?—Where have I been? I a never been no where—what though—I do knaw how to stir my broth without scalding my vinger—I can zee an owl in an oven as soon as another.

Miss Turn. But when be us to go and zee the zights?

Sq. Oh, we'll go all together on the wedding-day.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—I wish it were here.

Sq. Ay, ay—I daunt doubt thee—women, pigs, and poultry be never zatisfied.

Miss Turn. An be you to be married as well?

Sq. Be I to be married as well? Why, to be zure I be—thee bist a vool—Isn't vather dead? an hannot I three thousand a-year, an the best pack o vox dogs in Zomerzetzhire? An didst na hear me tell miss 'at I would marry her?—What though—I do knaw how to catch two pigeons wi' one pea—Shew a dog a bone, and he'll wag his tail—He that is born a beauty is half married, an like will to like.

Miss Turn. Well, then, take me to parliament-house, an shew me the king, an the queen, an the lord-mayor, an the elephant, an the rest o' the royal vamily.

Sq. I tell thee thee shatn't.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—What zignifications my coming to London zity, an' I must be moped up a this'n: I will go, zo I will.

Sq. I tell thee thee shatn't.

Miss Turn. Why, then, an I munnut zee the king —I'll go into next room and zee his picter, that I will. [*Exit* MISS TURNBULL.

Sq. A hoic!—Barbara—Barbara—The helve after the hatchet—He that holds a woman mun ha' a long rope an' a strong arm—Women an mules will go their own road in zpite of riders or stinging nettles.

[*Exit Squire.*

SCENE II.

The House of MR VANDERVELT.

Enter VANDERVELT, (*meditating.*)

Vand. Clara is very beautiful—but mankind is very censorious—They will tell me that sixty-seven is too late in life to undertake the begetting, bringing up, and providing for a family—What of that—Must I go out of the world as I came into it—nobody to remember me?—Must the name of Vandervelt be forgotten?—Must I leave no pretty picture of myself?—Sixty-seven is but sixty-seven—Have not we a thousand examples of longevity upon record?—And then—as to cuckolds—I cannot be persuaded that they are as common now as they were when I was a youngster—Times, men, and manners alter—Children are born wittier, and the world gets more sedate—I myself am a living proof of it—I never go to bagnios now—I never break lamps, beat watchmen, and kick constables now—Once, indeed, I should have made very little ceremony about dignifying an elderly gentleman that had a handsome wife; whereas now I can lay my hand upon my heart, and

with a safe conscience declare I have no such wicked inclinations.

Enter CLARA.

Cla. Ah! mon cher papa! What, ruminating!

Vand. Ah! Turtle! But why do you always call me papa? you know I don't like that word, turtle.

Cla. And why, papa, do you always call me turtle? —Have not I told you, fifty times, it puts me in mind of calipash—and aldermen—and other ugly animals.

Vand. Calipash! Thou art sweeter, tenderer, more delicate, delightful, and delicious, than all the calipash and calipee in the universe—A gem—a jewel—that all the sophies, sultans, grand signiors, and great moguls of the whole earth have not riches enough to purchase.

Cla. Ah! Mon cher papa!—You are so gallant—You do say the most obliging things!

Vand. *Say* the most obliging things!—Ay, and will —No matter—Deeds—Title-deeds—Rent-rolls—— India bonds—Well—Death and the day of judgment will make strange discoveries.

Cla. Oh yes!—I know you wise men often meditate on these serious subjects.

Vand. Ay—Life is treacherous ground—One foot firm, and the next in a pit.

Cla. But why so melancholy, papa?

Vand. I have no friends—that is, no relations—no children—have made a great fortune, by care, and labour, and anxiety, and debarring myself the pleasures and comforts of life in my youth—And why should not I sit down and enjoy it?

Cla. Very true, and why don't you?

Vand. Because men are fools, and laugh, they don't know why—I hate ridicule—Nobody loves to be thought ridiculous—The world has got false notions —A man of fifty is called old, and must not be in

love, for fear of being pointed at—Whereas some men are older at thirty, than others at threescore.

Cla. Certainly.

Vand. What is threescore?

Cla. A handful of minutes!

Vand. That vanish like a summer shower.

Cla. Melt like a lump of sugar in a dish of tea.

Vand. That come you don't know how.

Cla. And go you don't know where.

Vand. Surely a man of sixty may walk through a church-yard without fear of tumbling into a grave?

Cla. If he can jump over it.

Vand. True—And I was once an excellent jumper—Sixty!—Why, Henry Jenkins, the Yorkshire fisherman, lived to a hundred and sixty-nine—So that a man of sixty, even in these degenerate days, has a chance to live at least an hundred years.

Cla. Well, I declare, papa, you are quite a blooming youth!—forty years younger, in my opinion, than you were a quarter of an hour ago!

Vand. Forty?

Cla. At least!

Vand. Why then, by dad, as thou sayest, I am a blooming youth—Ah, turtle!—I could tell you something—that would surprise you—I could tell you—Think what I could tell you.—(*Sings.*) "If 'tis joy to wound a lover"——hem——"how much more to give him ease."

Cla. "When his passion we discover." (*Sings.*)

Vand. (*Speaks.*) "Oh how pleasing 'tis to please."—Oh, I could tell—But no—no—no, no, no—You are sniggering—laughing in your sleeve—Ay, ay—I perceive it—You're a wit, and I am an old fool—Sneering—ridiculing me—I hate wit and ridicule.

Cla. Me a wit!—Lord, papa—I would not be such an animal for the world—A wit!——Why, a wit is a kind of urchin, that every man will set his dog at, but won't touch himself, for fear of pricking his fin-

gers. A wit is a monster, with a hideous long tongue, and no brains—A dealer in paradoxes—One that is blind, through a profusion of light—A wit is a spectre, that makes a pair of stilts of his criss-cross-row, walks upon metaphor, is always seen in a simile, vanishes if you come too near him, and is only to be laid by a cudgel.

Vand. Frightful indeed!—Thank Heaven, nobody can say I am a wit.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr Codicil the attorney desires to speak with you, sir.

Vand. Very well—I am coming.

Serv. Mrs Trip, madam, is in the house-keeper's room, and says she hopes your ladyship is well.

Cla. Desire her to walk up. [*Exit Servant.*

Vand. Who is Mrs Trip, turtle?

Cla. A person that lived several years in our family. She is at present lady's maid to Melissa, Sir Harry Portland's sister—She will divert me with her fine language: besides that, I wish to ask her how she likes Sir Harry's family.

Vand. I know Sir Harry's uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, very well—an old friend.

Cla. Indeed!—I never saw him here.

Vand. Why, no—I don't know how it has happened, but I have not seen him above twice these two years myself—he's an odd mortal—a whimsical old gentleman—Well—by, by!

Cla. Adieu!

Vand. By, by! [*Exit.*

CLARA *alone.*

This Sir Harry runs continually in my head—ay, and I am afraid has found a place in my heart—yes, yes—there's no denying that—but that *friend*—that Mr Osborne—whether it be my particular concern

for Sir Harry, or my superior penetration, I cannot discover, but that man wears to me a most suspicious, hypocritical face. (*Enter* MRS TRIP.) So, Mrs Trip, how have you done this long time?

Mrs Tr. Pretty well, thank you, madam, except that I am subject to the historicals, and troubled with the vapours; being, as I am, of a dilikut nirvus system, whereof I am so giddy, that my poor head is sometimes quite in a whirlpool; and if I did not bathe with my lady, the doctor tells me I should decline into a liturgy, and so fall down and die, perhaps, in a fit of apostacy.

Cla. And how long have you lived in Sir Harry's family, Mrs Trip?

Mrs Tr. I came soon after my poor dear lady, your mamma, died, and was interrogated; whereof I was at her funeral—My lady is a very good lady; that is, I mean, ma'am, my future lady, that I live with at present—she is to be married soon to Mr Osborne; and may Hydra, the god of marriage, tie the Gorgon knot—whereof I heard your ladyship is to be one of the ceremonials.

Cla. I am invited, and shall be there—But pray, Mrs Trip, what is your opinion of Mr Osborne?

Mrs Tr. Oh Lord, ma'am, consarning Mr Osborne—I heard a small bird sing.

Cla. A small bird sing!

Mrs Tr. Yes, ma'am.

Cla. Of what feather was this fowl?

Mrs Tr. Foul!—No, I assure you, your ladyship, as fair a speeshified person as any in England—whereof he has a great valiation for me.

Cla. Well.

Mrs Tr. And so the secret is, that Mr Osborne has won almost all Sir Harry's estate.

Cla. Indeed!

Mrs Tr. And, moreover, has pretended to be a synagogue, and a Jew, and has lent money in other

people's names, on mortgagees, and nuitants, whereof my friend has been a party consarned.

Cla. Good Heaven! what villainy! (*Aside.*) And pray who is your friend, Mrs Trip?

Mrs Tr. Oh, ma'am, I hope your ladyship won't intoxicate me on that head, for I know Mr Timid too well to—

Cla. Oh! it was Mr Timid.

Mrs Tr. Why—that is—ma'am—I didn't mean—Mercy!—What have I said?

Cla. You may assure yourself, Mrs Trip, I shall be careful not to do you any prejudice.

Mrs Tr. I am sure I am supinely obligationed to your ladyship. [*Exit* MRS TRIP.

CLARA *alone.*

Poor Sir Harry! He has a heart that does honour to mankind, that does not merit distress, yet, if I augur right, that must shortly feel the severest pangs a false friend can inflict—Ungrateful Osborne!—I must warn Melissa to beware of him, and, if possible, to detach Sir Harry from the gaming-table. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

SIR HARRY'S *House.*

Enter SIR HARRY, CLARA, MELISSA, VANDERVELT, *laughing.*

Cla. Ha! ha! ha! Sir Harry, you are a happy man!

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, you are a happy man!

Mel. Such an accomplished spouse!

Cla. And so kind an uncle!

Sir Har. Upon my soul, I can't help laughing; and yet the more I reflect on the affair, the more I am amazed—Sir Hornet is whimsical, 'tis true, but no fool.

Vand. Fool! Sir Harry!—no, no, he is always the readiest to spy the fooleries of other people—Many a time have I laughed at his whims and jokes—an odd mortal he is.

Cla. Nay, if he be so fond of a joke, who knows but he may have sent them on this errand for the joke's sake?

Vand. By dad, turtle, thou hast hit it.—As sure as can be, that's it—it is for the joke's sake.

Sir Har. Impossible—The affair is too serious to be intentional caprice.

Mel. But I thought, when I left you, you were coming to an eclaircissement.

Sir Har. Coming to an eclaircissement!—Why, I told them, as plain as I could speak, that no alliance whatever could take place between the families.

Mel. 'Tis certain they have not understood you then.

Sir Har. Well, there the matter must rest, till I can find an interpreter, for I can't make myself more intelligible.

Cla. And you have not had one tender love scene yet?

Sir Har. Not one—I am amazed at the girl's simplicity—it equals her ignorance—she speaks and looks so totally unconscious of impropriety, so void of intentional error, that I don't know how to reply.

Cla. Suppose, then, you were to practise a little—Come, I'll stand up for the young lady.

Sir Har. I shall still find a difficulty to speak.

Cla. Surely!

Sir Har. In very truth, ma'am. But it will be from a quite different motive.

Cla. Oh, for the love of curiosity, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Sir Har. I cannot, sir.

Vand. Cannot, Sir Harry! Why so?

Sir Har. For reasons, sir, which are far more easily imagined than described.

Vand. Nay, don't be afraid, Sir Harry.—My turtle knows how to answer interrogatories—you won't find her a simpleton, I'll warrant.

Sir Har. No, sir—the danger is, that she might find me one.

Vand. I fancy, Sir Harry, you are a little like me—cautious with the ladies, lest you should be made ridiculous—I am very circumspect in those matters.

Sir Har. You are very right, sir—It is not every one who has the gift of wearing a fool's cap with a grace.

Cla. Ay, but notwithstanding all this, Sir Harry, I should like to have a love scene with you.

Vand. How, turtle!

Cla. In the character of Miss Turnbull.

Vand. Oh!—Ay, do, Sir Harry, have a love scene with my turtle.

Sir Har. Any thing to oblige you, sir.

Vand. Come then—begin. (CLARA *sets herself in an awkward, silly attitude.*) Ah! ha, ha, ha!—look! look at my turtle lovidovey!

Sir Har. (*Addresses* CLARA.) My uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, madam, is desirous that I should gain the inestimable blessing of your hand.

Cla. Anan!

Vand. Ah! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Har. And give me leave to say, madam, however unworthy I may be of the happiness and honour intended me, no person can be more sensible of them.

Cla. What!—That be as much as to zay, you wun't ha' me, I zuppose. (*Whimpers.*)

Vand. Ah! ha! ha! ha!—Nay, but don't cry in earnest, lovidovey.

Sir Har. Oh dry those heavenly eyes, madam, and believe me, when I call every sacred power to witness my affection—I love, I adore, I die for you—Suffer me to wipe away those pearly tears, that hide the beauties of your cheek. (*Offering to salute her.*)

Cla. Hold, hold, Sir Harry!

Vand. Ay, hold, hold, Sir Harry!

Sir Har. Why so, sir?—'Tis quite in character.

Cla. Deuce take you, Sir Harry—You—you are too passionate in your feigned addresses—So warm and pressing——

Vand. Ay—so warm and pressing.

Cla. One was not aware.

Sir Har. I was taken by surprise myself, madam—The bounteous god of love kindly contrived an op-

portunity, which my profound adoration, and a conscious want of merit, had totally deprived me of—Pardon me, if, for a moment, I forgot that respect which every one who beholds you cannot help feeling.

Vand. Why, what's this, Sir Harry? You are not in downright earnest, are you?

Sir Har. Sincere, as dying sinners imploring mercy.

Vand. What, in love with my turtle!

Cla. Pooh—Why, no, to be sure—We were only acting a supposed scene.

Vand. Supposed!—Bedad, I think it was devilish like a real scene—You both did your parts very naturally.

Sir Har. Oh, sir! no actor who feels as forcibly as I do can ever mistake his character.

Vand. Feels forcibly!—Your feelings are forcible indeed.

Mel. Come, come, let us adjourn to the drawing-room: I want to have your opinions on a painting of Coreggio's, that my brother has made me a present of.

Vand. Favour me with your hand, young lady—And, Sir Harry, do you take my turtle's—but don't you let your feelings be too forcible. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Hall in SIR HARRY'S *House.*

Enter SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG *and Servant, as just arrived.*

Sir Hor. Are the trunks safe, sirrah, George?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. And did you order that dog of a postillion to take care of the poor devils the horses?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. And of himself?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. You did, sir?—Why then, do you go, and take care of yourself, you rascal.

Serv. I will, sir.

Sir Hor. And do you hear, George!

Serv. Sir!

Sir Hor. If I find you disobey my orders, I'll break your bones.

Serv. I'll be very careful, sir, I assure you.

[*Exit Servant.*

Enter TIMID *and* SCRIP.

Tim. Brokerage comes rather heavy, Mr Scrip, when the sum is large.

Scr. Heavy! no, no—a damned paltry pittance—five and twenty pounds only, you see, for selling out twenty thousand—Get more by one lucky hit than fifty of these would produce.

Tim. Ay!

Scr. Oh yes!—Jobbing—Stock-jobbing, between you and me, is the high road to wealth.

Tim. Lack-a-day, may be so—Well, good day.—(SCRIP *is going, but seeing* SIR HORNET, *stops to listen.*)

Sir Hor. What, old Lack-a-day!

Tim. Ah, Sir Hornet!

Sir Hor. What's the best news with you?

Tim. Ah, lack-a-day, the best news I know is scarce worth relating.

Scr. Beg pardon, sir—(*To* SIR HORNET)—beg pardon—bad news in town, did you say?

Sir Hor. Bad, sir! not that I have heard.

Scr. Exceedingly sorry for it!

Sir Hor. Sir!

Scr. Never was more distressed for bad news!

Sir Hor. Distress'd for bad news!

Scr. Excessively! The reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the grand fleet, either of the three would make me a happy man for life.

Sir Hor. The destruction of the grand fleet make you happy for life!

Scr. Completely.

Sir Hor. Here's a precious scoundrel!

Scr. No great reason to complain, to be sure—do more business than any three doctors of the college—Generally of the sure side—Made a large fortune, if this does not give me a twinge—rather overdone it; but any severe stroke—any great national misfortune, would exactly close my account.

Sir Hor. Hark you, sir!

Scr. Sir!

Sir Hor. It is to be hoped——

Yes, sir, it is to be hoped.

Sir Hor. That a halter will exactly close your account.

Scr. Sir!

Sir Hor. You raven-fac'd rascal! Rejoice at national misfortunes! Zounds! I thought such language was no where to be heard from the mouth of an Englishman, unless he were a member of parliament.

Scr. Lord, sir! you don't consider that I am a bear for almost half a million.

Sir Hor. You are an impudent villain!—rejoice at the distress of your country!

Scr. Why, Lord, sir, to be sure—when I am a bear—There's not a bear in the Alley but would do the same—Were I a bull, indeed, the case would be altered.

Sir Hor. A bull!

Scr. For instance, at the taking of Charlestown,

no man was merrier, no man more elate, no man in better spirits.

Sir Hor. How so, gentle sir?

Scr. Oh, dear sir, at that time I was a bull to a vast amount, when, very fortunately for me, the news arrived; the guns fired; the bells clattered; the stocks mounted; and I made ten thousand pounds!—— Enough to make a man merry—Never spent a happier night in my life!

Sir Hor. Aha!—then, according to that arithmetic, you would be as merry and as happy to-night, could you accomplish the destruction of this said British fleet.

Scr. Happier! happier by half!—for I should realize at least twice the sum!—twice the sum!

Sir Hor. Twice the sum?

Scr. Ay, twice the sum!—Oh!—that would be a glorious event indeed! Never prayed so earnestly for any thing since I was born—and who knows—who knows what a little time may do for us?

Sir Hor. Zounds! how my elbow aches. (*Aside.*)

Scr. I shall call on some leading people—men of intelligence—of the right stamp.

Sir Hor. You shall!

Scr. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. Why, then—perhaps you will be able to destroy the British fleet between you.

Scr. I hope so—I hope so—do every thing in my power—Oh! it would be a glorious event.

Sir Hor. Hark you, sir—Do you see that door?

Scr. Sir!

Sir Hor. And this cane?

Scr. Why, but, sir!

Sir Hor. Make your exit, you imp.

Scr. But, sir!

Sir Hor. Get out of the house, you vile rascal, you diabolical——(*Drives* SCRIP *off.*) A son's son of a scoundrel—Who is he? What business had he here?

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir, he is a stock-broker, that Sir Harry employ'd, at his sister's request, to sell out for her; because she chuses to have her fortune in her own possession against to-morrow.—I have been paying him the brokerage, and receiving the money, which I shall deliver to Madam Melissa directly.

Sir Hor. An incomprehensible dog! Pray for the reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the British fleet!

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir! it is his trade.

Sir Hor. Trade! a nation will never flourish that encourages traders to thrive by her misfortunes.—But come—tell me something of my own affairs—Where is Harry—How does he go on?

Tim. Ah, lack-a-day!

Sir Hor. What—is he a wild young dog—Does he get into thy books?

Tim. Ah, lack-a-day!

Sir Hor. Ay, lack-a-day!—Zounds, don't sigh, man—He won't die in thy debt.

Tim. Ah, lack-a-day, Sir Hornet! he should be welcome to the last farthing I have in the world.

Sir Hor. Should he, old Truepenny!—Then give me thy hand—thou shalt be remembered in my codicil.—But what—he shakes his elbow I suppose, hey?—Seven's the main?

Tim. Ah, lack-a-day, Sir Hornet! what between main and chance he has been sadly nicked.

Sir Hor. Has he?—I'll score his losings upon his pate, a dog—that is, if he will let me—But where is Miss Turnbull?—She'll soon reform him: her angelic smiles will teach him—

Tim. Sir!

Sir Hor. Sir! Zounds, you stare like the wooden heads of the twelve Cæsars—Miss Turnbull's charms, I say, will find employment for all his virtues, and wean him from all his vices.

Tim. Will they, sir?

Sir Hor. Will they, sir! Yes, they will, sir.

Tim. Lack-a-day!

Sir Hor. Lack-a-day!—What ails you?

Tim. Nothing, sir, nothing—only that I am afraid my eyes begin to grow very dim.

Sir Hor. Your head, I believe, begins to grow very thick.

Tim. Ah, lack-a-day, sir, like enough—like enough!

Sir Hor. Be kind enough to answer me a few questions.—Is not Miss Turnbull a beautiful girl?

Tim. May I speak truth?

Sir Hor. May you speak truth! To be sure you *may*.

Tim. Then I answer, no, sir.

Sir Hor. No!

Tim. No.

Sir Hor. Is she not an elegant girl?

Tim. No.

Sir Hor. Nor a witty girl?

Tim. No.

Sir Hor. No!

Tim. No.

Sir Hor. No!!

Tim. No.

Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol!—Tititum!—Pray, what is she in your opinion?

Tim. A silly, ignorant, ill-bred, country girl, and very unfit for Sir Harry's wife.

Sir Hor. Tol de rollol—laditum—let me look in your face—Yes, yes—he has it—the moon's almost at full. —Poor Lack-a-day!—which is your right hand?—(TIMID *holds it up.*) Indeed! Wonderful!—And are you really in your sober senses?

Tim. Why, indeed, sir, I begin to be rather in doubt—I believe so—but lest I should lose them, I will wish your honour a good morning. [*Exit.*

SIR HORNET *alone.*

Lack-a-day—ha! ha!—Not beautiful—nor witty—nor—tol de rol lol—The old fool has a mind to set up for a wit, and has begun by bantering *me*—Zounds, I was neither drunk nor mad—and, to the best of my knowledge, I am not now in a dream—The brother, indeed, is a booby, and does not appear to be of the same family—hardly of the same species—though he had sense enough to snap at the offer immediately—I remarked he did not stand on ceremony.—Surely I have made no mistake in the business—S'blood, if it prove so!—Parson Adams the second—I shall—Hey!—Who's this?—No—no, no—it is—'tis she herself, in propria pers—(*Enter* CLARA.)—Miss Turnbull, I most heartily rejoice to see you.

Cla. Miss Turnbull! (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. Your presence has relieved me from one of the oddest qualms—But the sight of you has given me a cordial.

Cla. What do you mean, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. Mean, my angel! Why, here has been a bantering, lying, enigmatical son of a scoundrel, with a bundle of ironical, diabolical tales, railing at your beauty and accomplishments, till, egad, I began to fancy my fine-flavoured pine-apple a crab.

Cla. This is delightful!—I half suspected this from the first—But the mistake is so pleasant, that I cannot find in my heart to undeceive him. (*Aside.*) There is no answering for the difference of taste, sir.

Sir Hor. True—Asses prefer thistles to nectarines—But yet he must be an ass indeed, who could not distinguish St Paul's from the pillory.

Cla. Taste, Sir Hornet, is a sort of shot silk, and has a variety of shades—a camelion—One says 'tis blue, another black, and a third is positive 'tis yellow—every body has it, yet nobody can tell what it is—Like space, it is undescribable, though all al-

low there is such a thing—It would be a vain attempt, therefore, for Miss Turnbull to endeavour to please the whole world.

Sir Hor. An old booby—I would not give a hair of the pope's beard to please him.—But how is it with Sir Harry—Is *he* in raptures? Is *he* dying for you?

Cla. No, sir—he eats and drinks as usual, and is, for aught I can discover, in tolerable good health.

Sir Hor. Is he?——An audacious dog!——In good health!—If I find him in good health, I'll pistol him—But you mistake the matter perhaps—The rascal's proud, and not willing you should see his sufferings—He is a stricken deer, and sheds his tears in solitude and silence mayhap—Do you discover no symptoms of the sighing swain?—Does he never cut his fingers—or scald himself—or run against a post, and beg its pardon?

Cla. No, sir.

Sir Hor. I doubt he is a sad dog—But no—no, no—I am certain he adores you—'Tis impossible he should do otherwise—But there is another material point, about which I am not quite so certain.

Cla. What is that, sir?

Sir Hor. Has he found any place in your affections?—'Tis true, he's a fine fellow—I don't mean, by that, one that is pickled in cosmetics—preserved in musk and mareschal powder, and that will melt away, like Lot's wife, in the first hard shower—None of your fellows that are too valiant to give a woman the wall, and too witty to let her have the last word—But one that is—In short, his own manner will best describe what he is.

Cla. True, Sir Hornet; but the time has been so short.

Sir Hor. Short!—Ah, madam, if he did not do the business with a *coup d'œil*—at once—I would not give a feather of a goose-wing for all the arrows his Cupid has in his quiver—But come, Miss Turnbull—

I know you are above the silly prejudices that ordinary minds are swayed by—tell me sincerely—Has he made any impression on your heart?—Is he the man?

Cla. To speak ingenuously, Sir Hornet, that is a point entirely undetermined at present.

Sir Hor. Undetermined!—Why!—what!

Cla. Sir Harry's person is engaging—his manners delightful, and his understanding unexceptionable.

Sir Hor. Bravo! my dear girl!—you charm me to hear you say so!

Cla. I will say more, Sir Hornet—I find my heart interested in his behalf, and sincerely believe I shall never see another man with whom I could be half so happy.

Sir Hor. My dear Miss Turnbull!

Cla. But yet I have too many reasons to fear it will be impossible we should ever be united.

Sir Hor. Impossible!

Cla. I do most firmly believe Sir Harry possesses a thousand virtues, but they are all tinged, discoloured by a failing, which, if not in its own nature as erroneous as some other vices, is more destructive than any.

Sir Hor. I understand you.

Cla. This will for ever deter a woman who values her own peace and welfare from cherishing a passion that must, in its consequences, be so fatal.

Sir Hor. But you, my angel, will soon cure him of this—It is not a rooted vice.

Cla. Permanently—or my intelligence says false—When he loses, there is no possibility of persuading him to desist—the recollection of his loss preys upon his mind, and had he the Indies, he would set it upon the chance of a card, the turn of a guinea, or the cast of a die.

Sir Hor. Well, but we have hopes that Mr Os-

borne will find means to reclaim him—he is continually with him, continually warning him, and——

Cla. Subtlety and refined artifice!—Mr Osborne, Sir Hornet, is an interested physician, and would rather encourage than cure the disease.

Sir Hor. Heaven forbid!—But who informs you of this?

Cla. Those who are in the secret, I assure you, sir—I am afraid Mr Osborne is a wicked man—He is—what I dare not speak.

Sir Hor. I confess you alarm me, though I hope without cause—Osborne assumes every appearance of rigid virtue; and if this were true, he would be the worst of villains—However, suspend your opinion a while—I'll soon sift the affair—And, in the mean time, let me beg of you to think as well of Sir Harry as your doubts will permit you.

Cla. I shall do that, Sir Hornet, without an effort. [*Exit.*

Enter VANDERVELT.

(*Sees* CLARA *going off on the other side of the Stage.*)

Vand. Why, turtle!—Why—Ah! Sir Hornet—I am glad to see you.

Sir Hor. Ah ha—friend Van!—Why, you look tolerably well.

Vand. Tolerably well!——Ay, to be sure—Why should I not?

Sir Hor. Why should you not?——Let me see—There are, as near as I can guess, about seventy reasons why you should not.

Vand. Humph—Oh—what, my age!—No, no—Let me tell you, Sir Hornet, I——I am not an old man.

Sir Hor. No!

Vand. No—nor you neither.

Sir Hor. Indeed!—I am exceedingly glad of that—and pray when did you make this discovery?

Vand. Make it—Why, I have been making it these twenty years and upwards.

Sir Hor. Oh ho!—And how do you prove it?

Vand. By comparison and reflection—I'll tell you—hold—first I'll shew you—what I call *my* list of worthies.—There—look at that—(*Gives a common-place book.*)

Sir Hor. What the devil have we here?—(*Reads.*) "*Patrick O'Neal*—married, for the seventh time, at the age of one hundred and thirteen—walks without a cane, never idle—children and great great grandchildren, to the number of—one hundred and twenty-three!"

Vand. There's a fellow!—I warrant that man is alive and hearty at this moment.

Sir Hor. Humph!—And pray, do you think to imitate this worthy, as you call him?—Will you be married seven times, and have a hundred and twenty-three children?

Vand. That's more than I can tell.

Sir Hor. Ha!—(*Reads.*) "*Thomas Par*, being aged one hundred and twenty, fell in love with Catherine Milton."

Vand. Ay, and did penance in a white sheet at the church door.

Sir Hor. Humph!—"*Henry Jenkins.*"

Vand. Ay!—There's another!—corrected his great grandson, a youth of seventy, with his own hand, for being idle.

Sir Hor. "*Johannes de Temporibus*, or, JOHN OF TIMES, armour-bearer to the emperor Charlemagne, died, aged three hundred threescore and one years."

Vand. Very well, now tell me—when you compare me to *Johannes de Temporibus*, that is, when you compare sixty-seven to three hundred threescore and one, can you say I am an old man?

Sir Hor. An old man!—By the beard of Methu-

selah, thou art scarce an infant—it will be perhaps these five years yet before thou art perfectly a child.

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet, let me beg of you to be serious—you are an old friend, and know the world—I shall be glad of your advice—I ruminate on these things by myself, till I am quite melancholy—now, if I had but somebody to bear half my griefs, I should suppose—they would be lessened.

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, one would imagine so.

Vand. Don't you think then, if I were to take a handsome—young—wife—I should, perhaps, find a cure for all my ills?

Sir Hor. An infallible one.

Vand. And this is seriously your opinion? (*Very gravely.*)

Sir Hor. Seriously. (*Affectedly grave.*)

Vand Then tell me—You were talking with the young lady that went out as I entered.

Sir Hor. Well, what of her?

Vand. Is she not very beautiful?

Sir Hor. A divinity.

Vand. Finely accomplished?

Sir Hor. Beyond description.

Vand. That's right!—You are a sensible, discerning man, Sir Hornet, and I am delighted to find you approve my choice.

Sir Hor. *Your* choice!

Vand. *My* choice—That is the young lady, you must know, to whom I intend to pay my addresses.

Sir Hor. Your—your—your—your what?

Vand. The lady I mean to marry.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! (*Laughs excessively.*)

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet!

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! all mad—every soul.

Vand. I don't understand!

Sir Hor. Most reverend youth, I beg your pardon; ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Vand. You see things in a mighty strange light, Sir Hornet.—Is it any miracle that a man should love a beautiful woman?

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!—Love! Why, thou'rt another Ætna—Cupid's burning mountain.—Your nose has took fire at your fancy, and is become a beacon, to warn all young gentlemen, of threescore and ten, of the rocks and quicksands hid in the sea of amorous desires.

Vand. Upon my word, Sir Hornet, this is exceedingly strange.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha!—You must excuse me—What a rosy youth—Ha, ha, ha!—Hark ye, friend Vandervelt, *(Gravely,)* it's my opinion you have been bantering me rather.

Vand. Odd—that's a good thought. (*Aside.*)—Bantering you! Why, ay, to be sure I have—ha, ha, ha! (*Forces a laugh.*)

Sir Hor. Oh! you have?

Vand. Certainly; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha, ha! *(With the same tone and manner.)*

Vand. Didn't you perceive that before? Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. No, faith—ha, ha, ha!

Vand. That's a good joke! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Excellent! ha, ha, ha!

[*The laugh continues some time, during which* SIR HORNET *imitates* VANDERVELT'S *voice and manner exactly, then stops suddenly, and looks very grave.*)

Vand. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ha, ha!——

Sir Hor. Now let us be serious.

Vand. With all my heart.

Sir Hor. And I'll tell you a story.

Vand. Do.

Sir Hor. There was a certain ancient personage of my acquaintance, called Andrew Vandervelt—

Vand. What! Is your story about me?

Sir Hor. Give me leave, young gentleman, and you shall hear—Every body imagined him to be a prudent, sedate, grave person, with a moderate share of common sense.

Vand. Well.

Sir Hor. And as it was evident his beard was grey, his limbs palsied, his skin shrivelled, and his sinews shrunk——

Vand. How, Sir Hornet!

Sir Hor. They naturally concluded he had made his will, wrote his epitaph, and bespoke his coffin.

Vand. Mercy upon me!

Sir Hor. But instead of meditating, like a pious Christian, on the four last things, a crochet takes him in the head, he buys a three-penny fiddle, scrapes a matrimonial jigg, claps a pair of horns upon his head, and curvets through the town, the sport of the mob, derided by the young, pitied by the old, and laughed at by all the world.

Vand. Heaven deliver me! What a picture! But you forget, Sir Hornet—Didn't I explain to you that it was only a joke?

Sir Hor Oh! true—Ah, witty rogue!—Well—adieu—I'll remember the joke—ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ay, do—ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Oh for a song to the tune of "Room for Cuckolds!" [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Chamber at SIR HARRY'S.

Enter SIR HARRY, *(much agitated.)*

Sir Har. May the everlasting curse of heaven consume those implements of hell—those deceitful, infernal fiends!—I'll never touch, never look on cards or dice again—If I ever make another bet, may all the horrors of a ruined fortune haunt me, sleeping and waking—may I be pointed at by children, and pitied by sharpers—Distraction! *may* I be—I *am* already ruined, past redemption.

Enter Servant, and delivers a letter to SIR HARRY.

Sir Har. (*Breaks open the letter hastily.*)—Um—Um—Stay, sir. (*To the Servant.*)—Damnation! Is it possible? In league with sharpers!—Who brought this letter, sir?

Serv. A porter, sir.

Sir Har. Where is he?

Serv. Gone, sir—he ran off round the corner in a hurry.

Sir Har. You may go, sir. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter OSBORNE.

Osb. You seem moved, Sir Harry: may I enquire the cause?

Sir Har. You are the cause, sir.

Osb. I!

Sir Har. Yes, you—There, read, sir.

Osb. (*Reads.*) "Beware of a false friend.—The person who gives you this caution would sacrifice a life to preserve you from the destruction that threatens you—Mr Osborne is in league with Jews and sharpers, and you are a victim to his avarice and duplicity."—So, so—(*Seems chagrined.*)—Well, Sir Harry, do you give any credit to this epistle?

Sir Har. Nay, sir, you are to tell me how much, or how little credit it deserves.

Osb. Why, look you, Sir Harry, I cannot, nor I will not enter into explanations.

Sir Har. Sir!—Cannot, nor will not enter into explanations!

Osb. No, sir.

Sir Har. But I say, sir, you shall.

Osb. Shall!

Sir Har. Yes, sir, shall.

Osb. Ay, sir—Who is he that *shall* make me?

Sir Har. I am he, sir.

Osb. Indeed!

Sir Har. Friendship, honour, honesty ought to make you—but present appearances declare you void of these.

Osb. Present appearances declare you void of reason, sir, otherwise you would remember me for one of those who are not to be terrified by a loud tongue or an angry brow—I repeat it—I will not now enter into explanations—I have played with you: I have staked *my* money, and won *yours*—Would it have been dishonourable had you won mine? I have disposed of that money as I thought proper—no matter whether with Jews or Christians; and I should have supposed your passion and suspicion would have required better proof than the malevolent as-

persion of an anonymous letter, ere they ought to have incited you to a quarrel with your friend.

Sir Har. I beg your pardon, dear Osborne—I am to blame—nothing but the severity of my late losses can plead for me—I know you to be a noble-hearted, worthy fellow, and explanations, on such an accusation, are as much beneath you to give, as me to demand—Forget my silly warmth; it is my weakness.

Osb. Do you forget the cause on't, Sir Harry, and it is forgot.

Sir Har. It was madness—I am above suspicion—'tis ungenerous—'tis damnable—pray excuse—pray forgive me.

Osb. Well, well, think no more on't—only guard against suspicion for the future. [*Exit* OSBORNE.

Sir Har. No, no—it cannot be—there is an open fortitude in his manner—a boldness that can only result from innocence.

Enter MELISSA.

Mel. Oh, brother, I am glad I have found you—Why did you send these troublesome things to me? Why did not you take care of them for me? Trust a giddy girl, indeed, with a parcel of bank-bills—Here, here, here they are—take 'em—take 'em—they will be safe with you—I have been in a panic ever since they were in my possession, lest they should take wing, and fly through the key-hole, or some other unaccountable way—I am unused to such large sums, and don't feel happy while they are about me.

Sir Har. But what am I to do with them?

Mel. Keep them till to-morrow, and then you know, when you give my hand to your friend, you may give them too, to make it the more acceptable—there are just twenty, of one thousand each.—So now I am easy—good bye—I am going to purchase a few knick-knacks. [*Exit* MELISSA *hastily.*

Sir Har. Well, but, sister Melissa—She's gone

—flown on the light wings of innocence and happiness—while I, depressed by folly, feel a weight upon my heart, that hope itself cannot remove.—What is a ruined gamester?—An idiot—who begins for his amusement, who continues hoping to retrieve, and who is ruined before he can recollect himself—a wretch—deserted, solitary, forlorn—ashamed of society, yet miserable when alone—shunned by the prosperous—despised by the prudent—deservedly exposed to the poisoned shafts of insolence and envy—a by-word to the vulgar, and a jest to the fortunate—haunted by duns, preyed upon by usurers, persecuted and curs'd by creditors.—Inexplicable infatuation! [*Exit* SIR HARRY.

SCENE II.

Another Apartment.

Enter CLARA, MELISSA, *and* SQUIRE TURNBULL.

Mel. Mr Turnbull, I must beg, sir, you'll desist.

Sq Dezist—why, to be zure—I'll go and buy license out o' hand—make hay while the zun do zhine—and don't lose the zheep for a ha'perth o' tar—what though—the pepper-box must ha' a lid—a bushel o' words wun't vill a basket—when the owl goes a-hunting, 'tis time to light the candle.

Cla. Ha, ha, ha!—If you'll permit me, my dear, I think I can relieve you from this embarrassment.

Mel. Permit you!—I am sure if you can, you shall be canonized, and have churches erected to your memory.

Cla. I'll talk to him in his own language—he can comprehend no other.

Sq. Well, vair lady.

Cla. Well, zir.

Sq. You do zee how the nail do drive—Be you to be one at bridal?

Cla. No.

Sq. No!—Why zo?—You'st be bride-maid.

Cla. No, but I wun't.

Sq. Wun't you?

Cla. No—nor you'st not be bridegroom nother.

Sq. No!

Cla. No.

Sq. How zo?

Cla. Because you've zold the skin avore you've catch'd the vox—You've reckoned your chickens bevore they be hatch'd.

Sq. Nay, nay—stop at the dike—zure I do knaw my own mind—an' miss be agreed.

Cla. But miss ben't agreed.

Sq. No!—That's a good joke—but she be though.

Cla. But she ben't though.

Sq. But I am zure she be.

Cla. But I'm zure she ben't.

Sq. No!—Why, miss—ben't you agreed?

Mel. No, sir.

Sq. (*Astonished.*) No!

Cla. You may gape, but the cherry won't drop—Too much mettle is dangerous in a blind horse—Misreckoning is no payment—John would a' wed, but Mary war na willing.

Mel. You seem surprised, sir—I can only say it is without reason—You have deceived yourself, in supposing such an alliance possible; and I hope your own good sense will inform you that, after this declaration, any renewal of your addresses to me must be considered an insult.

Sq. (*Stares, as if he did not comprehend her, for*

some time.) An' zo then—the meaning of all this vine speech, I zuppose, is that you wun't ha' me?

Mel. It is.

Cla. "Make hay while the zun do zhine—Don't lose the sheep for a ha'p'erth of tar—A bushel of words won't vill a basket—When the owl goes a-hunting, 'tis time to light the candle."—Your most obedient, gentle squire—ha, ha, ha!

[*Exeunt* MELISSA *and* CLARA.

Manet Squire.

Zo then—It zeems I a been reckoning without my host here—Well—What tho'—zoon hot zoon cold—zoon got zoon gone—Care's no cure—Zorrow won't pay a man's debts—He wanted a zinging bird that gave a groat for a cuckoo—an' he that loses a wife and zixpence has lost a tester.—(*Enter* MISS TURNBULL.) Why, Barbara! what be's the matter wi' thee? Where has thee been?

Miss Turn. Been!—Why, I a been wildered.

Sq. What, lost!

Miss Turn. Ees—an' if I had na' by good hap met wi' John, who has got direction in written hand, it were vive golden guineas to a brass varthin I'ad been kidnapp'd, an' zent to America, among the Turks.

Sq. Zerve thee right—thee must be gadding—But I a' news vor thee—the cow 'as kick't down th' milk—It's all off 'tween miss and I.

Miss Turn. Zure!—rabbit me, an I didn't guess as much.

Sq. Ees—the nail's clench'd—Zhe and I a' zhook hands an' parted.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—What, won't yo' ha' zhe?

Sq. No—I wun't—Her may whistle, but I zha'n't hear—her may beckon, but I zha'p't come—Catch me an' ha' me—I'm no vool—Zo, do you zee, an'

you be minded to wed, zay grace an' vall too, vor I don't like your London tricks, an zo I'st leave it as vast as I can.

Miss Turn. An' when be I to be wed?

Sq. Why, I do vind Zir Hornet be come, zo, when yo' do zee Zir Harry, yo' may zettle't—An', d'ye hear, Barbara—Don't let me vind yo' at any o' these skittish off an' on freaks—I a' zeen too much on 'um lately—Oh, here be Sir Harry coming—An' zo I'st leave you to make love your own way—I'st not play my ace o' trumps out yet. [*Exit Squire.*

Enter SIR HARRY.

Sir Har. So—here's my good whimsical uncle's Nonpareil, as he calls her—his phœnix—All alone, Miss Turnbull?

Miss Turn. Ees—Brother be just gone—A's vallen out wi' miss, an a's plaguily frump'd.

Sir Har. Sure!

Miss Turn. Ees—A zaid, too, at yo' an I be to make love.

Sir Har. He did!

Miss Turn. Ees—and I do knaw his tricks—a'll be in a woundy rage, an I don't do as he bids me.

Sir Har. What, will he be surly?

Miss Turn. Zurly!—a'll snarl worser than our great dog Jowler at a beggar.

Sir Har. He is ill tempered then?

Miss Turn. Oh, a'll zalk vor a vortnight round—an' when a comes about again, a'll make a believe to romp—an' then a' lumps—an' gripes—an' pinches—till I am quite a weary on't.

Sir Har. Well you may, I think——Poor thing. (*Aside.*)—And which way are we to make love?

Miss Turn. My gracious! don't you knaw?

Sir Har. I believe I can give a guess—You, I suppose, are to hang down your head and titter.

Miss Turn. Ees—(*Grins.*)

Sir Har. I—hem—and look sheepish.

Miss Turn. Ees.

Sir Har. You gnaw your apron—I twirl my thumbs.

Miss Turn. He, he!—Ees.

Sir Har. You say—it's a very fine day, sir; and I answer, yes, ma'am, only it rains.

Miss Turn. He, he, he!—Ees—iveck, that be vor all the world the very moral of our country vashion—Oh! but here be zomebody coming.

Enter SIR HORNET, CLARA, *and* VANDERVELT.

Sir Hor. Why, Harry, you dog, what, have you hid yourself, because you would not see me?

Sir Har. Dear sir, I am exceedingly glad to see you, but it is not a quarter of an hour since I heard of your being in town; and I suppose, sir, you will scarcely be angry at finding me in this company—(VANDERVELT, SIR HARRY, *and* MISS TURNBULL *walk up the stage in conversation.*)

Sir Hor. Finding you in—Zounds, what awkward cargo of rusticity has he got there? (*To* CLARA.)

Cla. A young lady from Somersetshire, with a tolerable good fortune, that Sir Harry, it is thought by some, intends to marry.

Sir Hor. Marry!—He should as soon marry the mummy of Queen Semiramis.

Cla. She has been strongly recommended to the family, sir.

Sir Hor. Recommended!—By whom?

Cla. By one you are very intimate with, and who has very great influence with Sir Harry, as well as with yourself.

Sir Hor. Ay!—Who is that?

Cla. Pardon me there, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Certainly the fellow cannot be foolish enough to admire her—but I shall soon discover that, by what he thinks of you.—Harkee, Harry!

Sir Har. Sir!

Sir Hor. I cannot, upon the whole, tell very well what to make of you—Are you thoroughly convinced that you are at this instant legally capable of making your will?

Sir Har. My will, sir!

Sir Hor. Ay—Are you of sound mind?

Sir Har. I believe so, sir!

Sir Hor. Then pray tell me, now we have you face to face, what is your opinion of Miss Turnbull?

Sir Har. Sir!—That is by no means a question proper to be answered in this company.

Sir Hor. Pshaw!—Damn your delicacy—Make your panegyric, and I'll blush for her and you too.

Sir Har. (*Shrugs up his shoulders.*) Sir, I have no panegyric to make.

Sir Hor. Sir!

Sir Har. Even so.

Sir Hor. Why, you impudent, confounded—Have you the barefaced effrontery, with such a picture before your eyes, to—

Sir Har. You have applied the torture, and my own ease requires confession.

Sir Hor. Humph—And so you—Now pray all be attentive, for Bacon's brazen head is going to utter—So you do not think Miss Turnbull a most engaging—

Sir Har. (*Smiles.*)

Sir Hor. Why, you intolerable—

Sir Har. I am concerned to see you so serious on the subject—I must acknowledge, that in this case, sir, I have either a most perverse or stupid imagination, and cannot, for the soul of me, discover the latent wonders in the young lady, which your better sight has so distinct a view of.

Sir Hor. Ha!

Sir Har. I am, however, exceedingly willing to try the utmost strength of my faith, to believe as

much as I can, and take the rest for granted; provided you will not inflict the punishment of a wife upon my superstition.

Sir Hor. Obliging youth!—(*Bows.*)—Inflict the punishment of a wife upon your superstition—And so you think, no doubt, a wife a burden, much too heavy for the back of so fine and pretty a town-made gentleman as yourself?

Sir Har. With the addition of Miss Turnbull's accomplishments, I most undoubtedly do, sir.

Sir Hor. You do—Humph—Pray, most civil sir—permit me to ask—perhaps there may be some other lady in this good company to whom your profound penetration would give the preference.

Sir Har. If such preference could in the least make me deserving of her, I have no scruple to say there is.

Sir Hor. Miracle of modesty!—there is.

Sir Har. Most assuredly—But though to possess the lady you hint at would make me blest beyond description, I have never dared to declare so much before, because I am conscious of being unworthy of such a profusion of charms and accomplishments.

Cla. Generous diffidence! (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. Charms and—What the devil is all this?—Where am I—at sea, or on shore—Have I a calenture in my brain, or is this my nose?—They—they call you Sir Harry Portland, don't they, sir?

Sir Har. And your nephew, sir.

Sir Hor. No—that's rather dubious—Well then, Mr Harry, or Sir Harry, or what you please—You are pretty well convinced, I suppose, that I *have* had some slight regard for you.

Sir Har. Perfectly, sir, and remember it with gratitude.

Sir Hor. That remains to be proved, friend—Ever since your father's death, if I don't mistake, I have

been tolerably busy, a little active, or so, in forming your mind and manners, and moulding you into a sort of being a man might behold without blushing.

Sir Har. It is impossible, sir, I should ever forget your goodness, though I am happy to be reminded of it.

Sir Hor. That's a fib, I believe—However, sir—among the rest of my cares, I was anxious to find a woman worthy of you—Nay, so solicitous was I about adjusting preliminaries, that though the gout had laid an embargo upon a parcel of my fingers and toes, I resolved to forego my own ease, and set sail immediately, that I might convoy you safe into the harbour of happiness.

Sir Har. I am very sensible of the benevolence of your intentions, sir, and only wish you had done me the honour to—

Sir Hor. Well, I have only a word or two more to say on the subject—I have been an enthusiastic old blockhead, 'tis true, and was fool enough to think all men had eyes; however, if you have not either the complaisance, the wit, or the love to hit upon some expedient to make your peace with Miss Turnbull, I will never see, never know, never speak to you again. And now, sir, you will act as your great wisdom shall direct.

Sir Har. Indeed, sir, I am distressed to see you so intent upon this business; I am exceedingly unhappy to do the least thing to incur your displeasure—at this moment especially—I have a thousand reasons to be dissatisfied with myself, and am grieved to add your anger to the list—I would do any thing in my power to preserve your friendship and affection, but this is too severe a task—I cannot totally forget common sense—I cannot entirely command so delicate a passion as that of love—A little time will discover whether I am ever to think of love or hap-

piness again!—Of this, however, I am certain—I never can possess either with Miss Turnbull.

[*Exit* SIR HARRY.

Sir Hor. Indeed, youngster! so resolute!

Cla. What a noble fortitude! (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. We shall see who will first read their recantation——An insensible blind puppy——I'll be a greater torment to him than a beadle to a beggar—a cat to a rat—or a candle to a moth—I'll singe his wings—I'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians.

Cla. Oh! Sir Hornet! you'll soon be of another opinion.

Sir Hor. Never—never—never.——(*Enter Squire behind, unperceived.*)—However, let him act as he will, Miss Turnbull shall have no cause to repent her coming to London.

Miss Turn. What! will yo' take me to zee the zights?

Sq. Who the devil bade that goose cackle?

Sir Hor. A curst idiot—or I have no skill in physiognomy.

Sq. What, Barbara!—Ees—that her be—though no vool neather—her do knaw better than to thatch her house wi' pancakes.

Sir Hor. Pshaw—Miss Turnbull! (*To* CLARA.)

Miss Turn. Ees—I be here.

Sir Hor. Again!—(*Takes* CLARA *by the hand.*) Give me leave, I say, dear Miss Turnbull, to—

Vand. Hey! Sir Hornet!

Cla. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Why!—what!

Vand. You don't take my turtle for Miss Turnbu[ll] sure?

Sir Hor. Your turtle!—I don't know what yo[u] mean by your turtle; but I take this young lady fo[r] Miss Turnbull, sure.

Vand. You do!

Sir Hor. Yes—I do.

Vand. } Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Cla. }

Sir Hor. Why—what the devil—hey—why, sure—

Vand. Ah ha, ha, ha, ha!—This is a good joke.

Sir Hor. A good joke!—Why, madam—Squire—Zounds!

Vand. Ah ha, ha, ha, ha!—I would not have missed this for a thousand pounds in new coined guineas.

Sir Hor. Mr Turnbull—Sir—Is not this your sister, sir?

Sq. Zister!

Sir Hor. Yes.

Sq. What, thic!

Sir Hor. Yes.

Sq. Thic Barbara!

Sir Hor. Zounds, yes, I tell you.

Sq. Why, no, to be sure—thic be Barbara.

Cla. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ha, ha, ha!—the biter bit—the fleerer fleer'd—ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. (*Whistles.*) Thic be Barbara.

Sq Ees—Thic be Barbara.

Miss Turn. Ees—I be Barbara.

Vand. Why, what a numskull your nephew is, Sir Hornet!

Sir Hor. Do you think so?

Vand. A blind, insensible puppy!

Sir Hor. Is he?

Vand. But you'll torment him—you'll singe his ngs—you'll plague him worse than Moses did the yptians—What a discovery!

Sir Hor. Oh yes—I have made more discoveries!

Vand. Ay, what are they?

Sir Hor. Why, the first is—You're an old fool—

the next is—I am another—and the third is, that we are not the only two fools in company.

[*Exit, in a passion.*

[*Exeunt* CLARA *and* VANDERVELT, *laughing.*

Manent Squire and MISS TURNBULL—(*they stand some time.*)

Sq. Barbara.

Miss Turn. Ees.

Sq. How does thee like London?

Miss Turn. I knaw not——It do zeem a strange place.

Sq. A strange place!

Miss Turn. Ees—I do think it be.

Sq. Thee dost?

Miss Turn. Ees.

Sq. An' zo do I—whereby, dost zee, I'll get out on't as vast as I can—a pretty chace, as the man zaid that rode vifty miles a'ter a wild goose.—London!—an' this be London, the devil take London—Come, pack up thy ribbands an' vlappets, an' make thyzel ready.

Miss Turn. Neea, zure—you wun't go zo zoon.

Sq. Wun't I?—an' I stay in thic town to-night, I'll eat it vor breakvast to-morrow.

Miss Turn. My gracious!

Sq. Come, come—don't stand mauxing and dawdling, but make thyzel ready.

Miss Turn. Lord!—Why, I a' zeen nothing yet.

Sq. No—nor nothing thee zhalt zee—that I promise thee—zo stir thy stumps, I tell thee.

Miss Turn. My gracious!—Mun I go down into 't country again like a vool, an' ha' nothing to say vor myzel?

Sq. Why, look thee, Barbara—come along—vor thee have come up like a vool, zo there can be no harm in thy going down like a vool. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Library in SIR HARRY'S *House.*

SIR HARRY *and* TIMID *discovered.*

Tim. Indeed, sir, you have always been the best of masters to me.

Sir Har. No, Timid, no——I have been a very weak, idle fellow, and have put it out of my power to be a good master to any one.

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir—don't say so—I am afraid I have been a bad servant—a very bad servant.

Sir Har. Never.

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir, you don't know—you don't know—Lack-a-day, I thought all for the best.

Sir Har. You have only done what I commanded.

Tim. To be sure, sir—but, lack-a-day—I wish I durst open my mind to him—I am terrified—he will never believe me innocent. (*Aside.*)

Sir Har. My ruin is all my own work—Here, Mr Timid, take this ring, and remember me—It may be the last present I shall ever make you.

Tim. Pray don't say so, sir—I am terrified.

Sir Har. I am going to Mr Osborne's.

Tim. To Mr Osborne's!

Sir Har. Yes. If you should not see me to-morrow morning——if any accident should happen——

Tim. Lack-a-day!

Sir Har. Give the state of my affairs, which I ordered you to draw up, to my uncle, and this picture to Clara, the young lady that is with him.

Tim. Sir, what do you mean?

Sir Har. Oh, nothing, nothing—I'm not very well—I—a slight swimming in my head, that's all; but there is no knowing what may happen.

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir, you terrify me! You talk like a dying man making his will.

Sir Har. No, no, not so; I have nothing to leave; and as to dying, men must die; live as long as they can, they must all die at last.

Tim. Shall I go for Sir Hornet, or your sister, or the young lady?

Sir Har. No, no young ladies for——Oh

Tim. Lack-a-day! my heart aches!

Sir Har. I am going to Mr Osborne's presently.

Tim. Lack-a-day! I wish he knew——I'll take the mortgage of the Kentish estate. Mr Osborne ordered me to bring it. I'll lay it open on Mr Osborne's table. I hope my dear master will see it—I hope he will discover all.—(*Aside.*)

Sir Har. Heigho!

Tim. Dear sir, don't sigh so; don't look so——Tell me what I can do to serve you, to oblige you, to make you happier?

Sir Har. Nothing, nothing. Past hope!—past cure!—quite, quite——

Tim. Lack-a-day!

Sir Har. A thoughtless, profligate, idle, dissipated fellow! Oh, my head, my head!

Tim. I cannot bear to see him so. I'll hurry to Mr Osborne's. I'll try if I can yet persuade him to be a true friend. I'll beg, I'll pray, I'll go down on my knees, I'll do any thing. [*Exit* TIMID.

Sir Har. Clara! an angel! a cherub! And what am I? Well, well, it will soon be all over!—there will be a sudden stop, a speedy end!—(*Laughing without.*) So happy! Heaven, Heaven increase your joys! Mine are for ever fled!—Light laughter, innocent smiles, and social mirth are fled for ever, for ever! Oh folly! Oh madness! [*Exit* SIR HARRY.

Enter SIR HORNET, VANDERVELT, *and* CLARA, (*laughing.*)

Sir Hor. Ay, ay, pray laugh, laugh heartily, I beseech you.—I deserve and I desire no mercy.

Cla. It is one of the oddest adventures.

Vand. How the deuce could you mistake that blowzabel, Miss Turnbull, for my turtle?

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, friend Van; but that happens to be a blunder which I never did, nor ever could make. I should as soon take myself for a king, or you for a conjuror. I only mistook this lady to be Miss Turnbull, not Miss Turnbull to be this lady.

Vand. Mistook Miss Turnbull and this lady, and —I don't understand it.

Cla. Be kind enough, Sir Hornet, to explain the matter.

Sir Hor. You remember, madam, I had some conversation with you in the rooms at Bath.

Cla. Perfectly.

Sir Hor. And you could not but perceive how forcibly I was struck with your wit, beauty, and accomplishments.

Cla. I recollect you were very polite, sir, and were pleased to say abundance of obliging things.

Sir Hor. Not half so many as I thought, I assure you, madam.

Vand. Well said, Sir Hornet. My old friend is quite enamoured with you, turtle.

Sir Hor. Yes, sir, so I am——though I do not intend to marry the lady.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. My grand object, the thing that, of all others, I have most at heart, is to see my nephew, Sir Harry, happy. As for myself, I feel I am growing old apace, and am almost tired of the farce of life.

Vand. Why so, Sir Hornet? I am sure you play your part excellently.

Sir Hor. No, no, I am rolling down hill apace, and as the first steep declivity may precipitate me to the bottom, there are certain affairs I wish to see finished, one of which is the marriage of Sir Harry.

Cla. So the person you asked concerning me, when I went out of the rooms, mistook the question, and thought you meant Miss Turnbull.

Sir Hor. So it appears, madam, and I was too much enraptured to stay to rectify mistakes. When I negociated the affair with 'Squire Turnbull, I studiously avoided an interview with his supposed sister, for fear the business should wear a face of precipitate indelicacy; and I thought if I could once bring you and Sir Harry together, I would leave the contingent possibilities to love, and the superior good qualities and penetration of the parties, which I, rationally enough, concluded could not fail to produce the desired effect.

Cla. But, Sir Hornet, how did it happen that you did not enquire of me myself who I was?

Sir Hor. Why, faith, madam, I had been so particular with you, and had spoken so freely on the subjects of love and matrimony, that I was afraid, if I made those kind of enquiries, you would mistake the matter perhaps, and think I wanted to make love to you in my own proper person. Hey, young Van—— (*Half aside.*)

Vand. Heigho!

Cla. Oh no, Sir Hornet; I assure you I had a better opinion of your understanding.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. Certainly, had I been capable of such a whim, I should have made myself cursed ridiculous. Hey, young Van—(*Half aside.*)

Cla. Beyond dispute!

Vand. Heigho!

Enter TIMID, *looking wild and frighted.*

Sir Hor. Hey-day! What's the matter with you, old Lack-a-day?

Tim. I'm terrified!—I'm terrified!—I'm terrified!

Sir Hor. Terrified! What's the matter? Zounds! why don't you speak?

Tim. Lack-a-day! I can't—I can't speak.

Sir Hor. Make signs then.

Tim. I'm a miserable old man!—I ran all the way to tell you——

Sir Hor. What?

Tim. Mr Osborne——

Sir Hor. Mr Osborne! What of him?

Tim. Lack-a-day!—Sir Harry——

Cla. Heavens!—A duel!

Tim. I have put my trust in man, and am deceived—I have lean'd upon a reed, and am fallen—I have seen the shadow of friendship, and——

Sir Hor. Curse light on your metaphors; come to facts. What of Osborne? What of Sir Harry? Where are they? What have they done? What are they doing?

Tim. Gambling!

Sir Hor. How!

Tim. I was at Mr Osborne's when Sir Harry came; I was there with the mortgage of the Kentish estate.

Sir Hor. Of what?

Tim. It was executed this very day. I am a miserable old man!—All lost!

Sir Hor. Lost!

Tim. Lack-a-day! That's not at all! I went into the next room, and heard Sir Harry go to gaming with a gang of sharpers that were there on purpose. Sir Harry had lost every thing he had in the world. Mr Osborne has got all—all the mortgages of all his estates—I saw 'em, lett 'em all in a box on his table.

Sir Hor. Mortgages of all his estates! Perdition! How did he get them? How came you to know?

Tim. Lack-a-day! I am terrified! I dare not tell!—I am an accomplice!—a wicked, innocent, miserable old man!

Sir Hor. Damnation! Order the coach there.—I'll tear him to atoms—I'll rend him piece-meal!—My poor boy! An intolerable villain! Dear madam, you don't know what I feel.

Cla. Pardon me, Sir Hornet; if you knew my heart, you would not say so. I detest the treachery of Mr Osborne as much as you do, and, woman as I am, would risk my life to see it properly punished.

Sir Hor. A smooth-tongued, hypocritical villain, that owes his life to my boy!

Cla. Dear Sir Hornet, excuse my weakness.—I am in the utmost terror—in dread of consequences still more fatal.

Tim. Lack-a-day, sir, so am I—I am terrified!—Sir Harry gave me this ring for a remembrance, and bade me deliver this picture to you, madam.

Cla. (*Looks at it, and bursts into tears.*) It is his own!

Tim. He look'd so melancholy and so furious.—He had his pistols.

Cla. His pistols!—Oh, for pity's sake, Sir Hornet, let us fly.

Sir Hor. Instantly.

Tim. I am a miserable old man! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

MR OSBORNE'S *House.*

SIR HARRY *enters excessively agitated, followed by* OSBORNE, *with a brace of pistols he had wrested from him.*

Osb. How now, Sir Harry—What is the cause of this sudden phrenzy? Why expose your want of temper and fortitude thus to the company? You have driven them away; they are all going.

Sir Har. Oh! horror!

Osb. If you must wreak vengeance on yourself, let it be a becoming one at least.

Sir Har. Insupportable horror!

Osb. Fie, fie, recover your temper; be, or seem to be, a man. What, you knew you were ruined before this event.

Sir Har. Oh, Osborne! Oh, Melissa! I cannot speak—I cannot utter it—I'm a wretch—a villain—the meanest—the worst of villains—and infamy—eternal infamy is mine!

Osb. Why, what have you done?

Sir Har. Ruined you—ruined my sister!

Osb. How?

Sir Har. And branded myself everlastingly a villain!

Osb. Ruined me!—ruined your sister! Which way?

Sir Har. The money I have lost within——

Osb. Well.

Sir Har. Is hers—is yours.

Osb. Mine!

Sir Har. Melissa's—her fortune; she put it into my hand this very day.

Osb. Damnation!

Sir Har. Have compassion on me.—Give me the pistols; let me at once put an end to my misery and shame.

Osb. Thoughtless, weak man! Do you think the momentary pang of death a sufficient punishment for the ruin and destruction you have entailed upon all those who have had the misfortune to love, or to be related to you? Do you think that to *die*, and to forget at once your infamy and crimes, is a compensation for the havoc you have made with the peace and property of those who were dearest to you, who must *live* to feel the effects of your vices, and bear, unjustly, the reproach of your abandoned conduct?

Sir Har. Oh, torture!

Osb. Was it not enough that you had reduced yourself from affluence and honour to contempt and beggary, but you must wantonly, wickedly sport with what was not your own, and involve the innocent and unborn in your wretchedness? Shall not your sister's offspring, whom your intemperance shall have reduced to poverty and misery, detest your memory, and imprecate curses on your name?

Sir Har. Oh, hell!

(SIR HORNET *speaks without, and afterwards enters, followed by* CLARA *and* TIMID.)

Sir Hor. Where are they? Which is the room? So, Mr Lucifer, could you decoy your friend to no other place to rob him but your own house?

Osb. Did you address yourself to me, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. Yes, I did, Sir Satan, and if——

Sir Har. Dear sir, forbear; I alone am the proper object of anger, of vengeance—a wretch!—a despised and miserable outcast! and bitterness and despair are deservedly my portion.

Sir Hor. You are a dupe! a poor fascinated fool! You have beheld the serpent's mouth open, have felt the influence of his poisonous breath, yet stupidly dropt into his ravenous jaws, and sung a *requiem* to your own destruction.

Osb. You are liberal, sir, of your epithets and accusations. What do you mean by them?

Sir Hor. Horrible impudence! Have you not taken a vile, a rascally advantage of the want of temper in the man for whom you professed the most perfect friendship? Have you not stripped him of his estate by the most villainous arts, by plotting with Jews and scoundrels?

Osb. You talk loud, sir.

Sir Har. Osborne!—plotting!—The letter then was true!

Sir Hor. Yes, plotting.—He is the principal, the leader of the hellish gang that has been plundering you.

Osb. Well, sir, suppose it—what then?

Sir Hor. What then?—Halters!

Osb. Why so, sir? He has persisted in bringing destruction upon himself, and must suffer the effects of his obstinacy. What crime was there in my receiving what he was resolved to throw away? He had not been a month returned from his travels, before his passion for play made him the jest of every polite sharper in town; they saw there was an estate to be scrambled for, and every one was industrious to obtain a share. After squandering a part of his fortune among these adventurers, he engaged at play with me, and after losing one sum, was never easy till he had lost another. Am I then to be accountable for his folly?

Sir Har. Infernal treachery! Dares he avow it?

Osb. Dare! Yes, sir, I dare.

Cla. Righteous Heaven! Is there no peculiar, no quick vengeance for ingratitude? (*Aside.*)

Sir Hor. The deeds, the annuities you have granted, the mortgages you have made, are in his possession; he owns he has them all.

Sir Har. He!

Osb. Yes, sir, I.

Sir Har. Madness! Remember and beware!—remember and tremble!—Though I have no longer the fortune of Sir Harry Portland, I have still Sir Harry's spirit, and dare chastise insolence and perfidy yet.

Osb. No doubt.—The man who is rash enough to risk his estate upon the chance of a die, has generally valour enough to wish to cut the winner's throat.—Friendship is no protection.

Cla. Friendship!—Monstrous prostitution! Friendship! Deeds, Mr Osborne, are the best proofs of friendship; and that preacher will gain but little credit who is a detected villain, while he is describing the fitness and beauty of moral virtue.

Sir Hor. Friendship! Where are the deeds, the mortgages?

Osb. There they are, sir.—(*Points to a box.*) They are mine; the annuities he has granted, and the mortgages he has made, are mine; his effects are mine, his houses are mine, his estates are mine, his notes are mine, his *all* is mine, except his poverty and spirit, which, as he says, are his own.

Sir Har. Heavens! must I bear this?

Sir Hor. Oh! for ratsbane or hemp.

Osb. Nay, more, sir. (*To* SIR HARRY.) I was not only aware, but certain of my own superior address, or I had not been weak enough to have risked any part of my fortune.—I have not yet acquired your heroic contempt for riches. As it was, I used every art to stimulate and incite you to play, took every advantage, studied every trick, improved every lucky chance, and rejoiced at every and all of your losses, till I had you totally in my power.—I beheld

distress accumulating on your head, and was happy at it; remarked the agitation of your mind, and increased it; saw the infirmity of your temper, and aggravated it.

Sir Har. Damnation!—Are you a man?

Osb. Try me.

Sir Har. Dare you give me the satisfaction, the revenge of a man?

Osb. I'll give it you instantly, sir.

(*As* SIR HARRY *offers to go,* OSBORNE *seizes his arm, and, before he speaks, his countenance changes from assumed anger and contempt, to the most tender and expressive friendship.*)

There, there lies your revenge—there is your satisfaction—take them—remember your former folly, and be happy.

Sir Har. Sir!

Sir Hor. What!

Cla. Astonishment!

Osb. Why do you seem surprised?—My heart is yours, my life is yours—I owe you every thing—A debt which never can be repaid, and never will be forgotten.—When sinking beneath the murderous hand of villainy, it was the benevolent ardour of your soul, it was the intrepid valour of your arm that rescued me.

Sir Har. Generous friend!

Osb. In that box is contained all that I have ever won of you, and almost all you have ever lost—I have become an associate with sharpers to protect you from them, and by sacrificing a little, have preserved the rest. I have worn the mask till it is become too painful, and now gladly cast it off.—(*To* SIR HORNET *and Company.*) If my conduct has yet a dubious appearance—I have a witness that will instantly be credited. (*Goes to the chamber door and calls* MELISSA; MELISSA *enters, runs to* SIR HARRY, *and falls upon his neck.*)

Mel. My brother!

Sir Har. Sister! Osborne!

Cla. Oh my heart!

Sir Hor. (*After a pause, and endeavouring to restrain his tears.*) Tol de rol.

Tim. Lack-a-day!—I'm a happy old man!—He's a true friend!—he's a true friend!—I'm a happy old man!

Sir Har. Can you too, sister, forgive my folly? You that I have injured so unpardonably?

Mel. Dear brother, you are not so guilty as you suppose—it was a plot upon you; you were led into it, to shew you what a losing gamester is capable of.

Sir Hor. Hark you, sir. (*To* OSBORNE.) All the mortgages and deeds are there, you say?

Osb. All, sir—together with whatever money else has, at any time, been won of him, since I have been concerned in this transaction.

Sir Hor. All in that box?

Osb. All.

Tim. I'm a happy old man.

Sir Har. My dear uncle!

Sir Hor. Let me alone—Tol de rol—(*Goes up to* OSBORNE, *takes his hand, and wipes his own eyes.*) Will you forgive me, Osborne? Will you? Will you forgive my boy?

Sir Har. (*Takes* OSBORNE'S *other hand.*) Osborne!—I cannot speak.

Cla. Indeed, Mr Osborne, I don't know how to tell you what I think—Esteem—admiration—veneration—are poor expressions to convey my feelings—I have been mistaken, and to blame—I trembled for Sir Harry, I rashly condemned you, and wrote a letter——

Sir Har. Dear madam, was that letter yours?

Cla. It was.

Sir Har. How much obliged am I to you, and to you all!

Cla. I am sorry—I was to blame.

Osb. Nay, madam—Nobody was to blame—Angels are actuated by motives like yours, and if they never err, it is because they have commerce with angels only.—And now, dear Harry, suffer me to say one word—Let this transaction be a powerful, an everlasting memento to you.—Remember the blood that has been spilt in the moment of passion and distress, in consequence of indulging in this shocking vice—Remember the distracted wife and widow's curse, the orphan's tears, the sting of desperation, and the red and impious hand of suicide; despise the folly that made the practice fashionable; oppose its destructive course, and for ever shun, for ever abominate the detestable vice of gaming.

Sir Har. Professions of resolution from me, Osborne, come with an ill grace—I am ashamed of my folly—I despised, even while I practised it; but the punishment you have inflicted has been so judicious, so severely generous, I think I can safely say, there is no probability of a relapse.

Sir Hor. Well, but, Harry, turn about—look at this lady—surely you have not forgot Miss Turnbull—have you?

Sir Har. Your Miss Turnbull, sir, I shall never forget.

Sir Hor. Oh! what, you have heard the renowned history of my Bath adventure?

Sir Har. I have, sir.

Sir Hor. Well, and what say *you* to—hey, my cherub—you told me, you know, you had no aversion to the fellow.

Cla. Nay, Sir Hornet, is that the part of a confidant?

Sir Hor. Why, yes, it is—for, as I take it, a confidant is but a kind of a go-between, to bring the parties together——And here comes the blooming youth—(*Enter* VANDERVELT)—here comes Johannes de Temporibus, to second the motion.

Vand. To second what motion, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. A hymeneal motion.

Vand. Can't tell.—Who are the candidates?

Sir Hor. Harry Portland and Clara Forester.

Vand. Hold, hold, Sir Hornet, not so fast!—That lady is my ward.

Sir Hor. Yes, and may, if she pleases, be your wife.

Vand. Nay—I—I did not say so, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. No, but I did, young Vane—But hark you—(*Takes him aside*)—resign all your silly pretensions peaceably, throw your worthies into the fire, and give up the lady to her lover; or you shall be held up, *in terrorem*, an object of ridicule, to frighten all the dangling, whining, old fools in Christendom, who are turned of threescore.

Vand. Well, well, speak in a lower key.

Sir Hor. May I be certain of your consent then?

Vand. Why, yes—yes—heigho!

Sir Hor. Dear madam—this worthy old gentleman, your guardian, most humbly implores you would have pity upon Sir Harry.

Cla. Did you say so, papa?

Vand. Me! no.

Sir Hor. How?

Vand. N——not in those exact words, but something very like it, turtle—heigho!

Mel. Come, my dear Clara—let me have the happiness to call you sister.

Osb. Let me intercede, madam.

Cla. Pshaw—here is every body interceding, but him that can intercede most to the purpose.

Sir Har. Forgive me, dearest Clara—My fate is suspended on your lips, and I am so conscious o unworthiness, and so much affected by the fear of a severe sentence, that I have not power to plead for mercy.

Cla. Yes—but you have a partial, tender-hearted judge.

Sir Hor. Ay—and a wise young judge too.

Cla. Well, well!—I cannot dissemble. A generous heart, a noble mind, are seldom met and seldom merited. When happiness like this presents itself, to reject is not to deserve it. [*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

SCHOOL FOR ARROGANCE;

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

BY

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT CONNOLLY VILLARS,	*Mr Lewis.*
MR DORIMONT,	*Mr Aickin.*
SIR PAUL PECKHAM,	*Mr Wilson.*
SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY,	*Mr Munden.*
EDMUND,	*Mr Farren.*
MAC DERMOT,	*Mr Johnstone.*
PICARD,	*Mr Marshall.*
BUTLER, COOK,	*Omitted.*
EXEMPT,	*Mr Thompson.*
BAILIFFS,	*Mr Cross.* *Mr Lee.*
FOOTMEN,	*Mr Farley.* *Mr Evatt.* *Mr Letteny.* *Mr Blurton.*
LADY PECKHAM,	*Mrs Mattocks.*
LUCY,	*Mrs Wells.*
LYDIA,	*Miss Brunton.*

Scene, London: The House of Sir Paul Peckham and the Apartments of the Count. Time twelve hours.

THE

SCHOOL FOR ARROGANCE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The House of SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Enter LYDIA, *followed by* MACDERMOT.

Ly. Once again, Mr MacDermot, have done with this nonsense.

MacDer. Arrah, and why so scoffish? Sure now a little bit of making love—

Ly. Pshaw! Do me the favour to answer my questions. The count, your master, is in love with Miss Lucy Peckham?

MacDer. Faith, and you may say that.

Ly. Is he really well born?

MacDer. Oh! as for that, honey, let him alone. The noblest blood of France, ay, and what is bet-

ter, of Ireland too, trickles to his fingers' ends—the Villars and the O'Connollies.

Ly. And he wishes to marry into the family of the Peckhams?

MacDer. The divle a bit, my dear.

Ly. How?

MacDer. He is viry willing to marry the young lady, but not her family. His pride and his passion have had many a tough battle about that, d'ye see. Only think! A direct descindant of the former kings of Ireland, and collateral cousin to the prisent peer of France, to besmear and besmoulder his dignity, by rubbing it against porter butts, vinegar casks, and beer barrels.

Ly. Miss Lucy is indeed a lovely girl, animated to excess, and sometimes apparently giddy and flighty; but she has an excellent understanding, and a noble heart; and these are superior to birth, which is indeed a thing of mere accident.

MacDer. Faith, and that it is—I, a simple Irishman, as I am—why now, I would have been born a duke, had they been civil enough to have asked my consint.

Ly. The count fell in love with her at the convent, to which she was sent to improve her French.

MacDer. And where I think you first met with her?

Ly. Yes—she saw me friendless, and conceived a generous and disinterested affection for me.—He has followed her to England; has taken apartments in our neighbourhood, and lives in splendour—yet is not rich.

MacDer. Um, um.—No—But then he is a colonel in the Irish brigade, and, beside his pay, has sacrit supplies.

Ly. From whom?

MacDer. Faith, and I don't believe he knows that himself.

Ly. That's strange!—His pride is excessive.

MacDer. To spake the truth, that now is his failing. —An if it was not for that, oh! he would be the jewel of a master!—He trates his inferiors with contimpt, keeps his distance with his aquals, and values the rubbishing dust of his great grandfathers above diamonds!

Ly. His character is in perfect contrast to that of his humble rival, Sir Samuel Sheepy; who, even when he addresses a footman, is all bows and affability; whose chief discourse is, yes, if you please, and, no, thank you; and who, in the company of his mistress, stammers, blunders, and blushes, like a great boy.

MacDer. What is it you till me? He the rival of the count my master! That old——

Ly. A bachelor, and only fifty; rich, of a good family, and a great favourite with Lady Peckham, by never having the courage to contradict her.

MacDer. Why, there now! You talk of the count's pride! Here is this city lady as proud as ten counts! Her own coach horses, ready harnessed, don't carry their heads higher! And then she is as insolent, and as vulgar, and—Hem!

Enter LADY PECKHAM *and* SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY, *followed by two Footmen, in very smart morning jackets.*

L. Peck. Here, fellers—go with these here cards. (*Footmen receive each a parcel of large cards, and are going.*) O, ! Tell that there butler to come to me instantly.—And—Do you hear?—When you comes back, get those dismal heads of yourn better pow-der'd; put on your noo liveries, and make yourselves a little like Christians. These creeters are no better nur brootes, Sir Samooel! They are all so monstrous low and wulgar!—I have a party to-night: I hopes you vill make von?

Sir S. Certainly, my lady.

L. Peck. Vhy, vhere is this butler?

Enter Butler.

But. I am here, my lady!

L. Peck. Is all the furniter rubb'd?

But. All, my lady!

L. Peck. The m'ogany bright?

But. As bees-wax can make it, my lady!

L. Peck. Bow pots in the china jars?

But. Yes, my lady!

L. Peck. The picters on the hall stair-case scoured?

But. Clean, my lady!—But, I—(*Hesitating.*)

L. Peck. You! You vhat?

But. I am afraid their eyes and noses will soon disappear.

L. Peck. Psha!—Feller!—Are the noo prints come home?

But. Yes, my lady!

L. Peck. And the karakatoors hung up in the drawing-room?

But. All, my lady!

L. Peck. You shall come and see 'em, Sir Samooel!

Sir S. Your ladyship has exquisite taste.

L. Peck. Oh! Sir Samooel!—Vell, feller?

But. My lady!

L. Peck. Vhat do you stand gaping at?

But. My lady!

L. Peck. Vill you be gone, feller?

But. Oh!—Yes, my lady, (*Aside,*) and thank you too! [*Exit.*

L. Peck. So, miss! is Sir Paul come to town?

Ly. I have not seen him, madam.

L. Peck. Sir Paul generally sleeps at our country seat, at Hackney.

Sir S. A pleasant retreat, my lady!

L. Peck. Wastly! A wery paradise!—Vhere is my daughter, miss?

Ly. I don't know, madam.

L. Peck. And vhy don't you know? Please to go and tell her Sir Samooel is here. (*Exit* LYDIA.)—A young purson that my daughter has taken under her purtection.

Sir S. Seems mild and modest, my lady.

L. Peck. Not too much of that, Sir Samooel.—Who—(*Surveying* MACDERMOT)—pray, who are you, young man?

MacDer. I!—Faith, my lady, I—I am—mysilf—MacDermot.

L. Peck. Who?

MacDer. The count's gintleman.

L. Peck. Gentleman! Gentleman, indeed! Count's gentleman!—Ha!—A kind of mungrel count, Sir Samooel; half French, half Irish! As good a gentleman, I suppose, as his footman here! I believes you have seen him though?

Sir S. I think I once had the honour to meet him here, my lady.

L. Peck. An honour, Sir Samooel, not of my seeking, I assure you! Aspires to the hand of Miss Loocy Peckham!—He!—An outlandish French foriner!—I hates 'em all! I looks upon none on 'em as no better nur savages! What do they vant with us? Vhy, our money, to be sure! A parcel of beggars!—I vishes I vus queen of England for von day only! I vould usher my orders to take and conquer 'em all, and transport 'em to the plantations, instead of negurs.

Sir S. I have heard, my lady, that the count was my rival.

L. Peck. He your rival, Sir Samooel! He! A half-bred, higgiety-piggiety, Irish, French fortin-hunter rival you indeed!—(*Enter* LYDIA.)—Vell, miss! Vhere is my daughter?

Ly. In her own apartment, madam, dressing.

L. Peck. She'll be down presently, Sir Samooel—Gentleman indeed! The count's gentleman! Ha! Pride and poverty!

[*Exeunt* LADY PECKHAM *and* SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY.

MacDer. (*Highly affronted.*) Pride!—By the holy footstool, but your ladyship and Lucifer are a pair! (*Knocking.*)

Ly. Here comes Sir Paul.

MacDer. Then I will be after going.

Ly. No, no; stay where you are.

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Ah! My sweet dear Liddy! You are the angel I wished first to meet! Come to my—(*Running up to her*)—Why, how now, hussy? Why so shy?

Ly. Reserve your transports, sir, for Lady Peckham.

Sir P. Lady!—But who have we here?

Ly. Mr MacDermot, sir.

Sir P. Oh! I remember—servant to the count, my intended son-in-law.

MacDer. The viry same, sir. (*Bows.*)

Sir P. I hear an excellent character of your master. They tell me he is a fine, hearty, dauntless, swaggering fellow! If so, he is a man of family, and the very husband for my Lucy.

MacDer. Faith, thin, and he is all that!

Sir P. As for this Sir Samuel Sheepy, he shall decamp—A water-drinker! A bowing, scraping, simpering, ceremonious sir! Never contradicts any body!—Dammee! An old bachelor! And he—he have the impudence to make love to my fine, young-spirited wench!—But he is my lady's choice!—Is she within?

Ly. Yes, sir.

Sir P. I suppose we shall have a fine breeze on

this subject! But what! Am I not the monarch, the grand seignior of this house? Am I not absolute? Shall I not dispose of my daughter as I please? Do you hear, young man? Go, present my compliments to the count, and tell him I mean to give him a call this morning.

(LYDIA *makes signs to* MACDERMOT *to stay.*)

MacDer. I am waiting for him here, sir.

Sir P. Waiting for him here, sir! No, sir! You cannot wait for him here, sir!

MacDer. But, sir—

Sir P. And, sir! Why don't you go?

MacDer. The count bid me, sir—

Sir P. And I bid you, sir—pack! be gone! [*Exit* MACDERMOT.]—Now we're alone, my dear Lydia—Why, where are you going, hussy?

Ly. Didn't you hear my lady call?

Sir P. Call? No.—And if she did, let her call.

Ly. Surely, sir, you would not have me offend her?

Sir P. Offend! Let me see who dare be offended with you in this house! It is my will that you should be the sultana!

Ly. Me, sir!

Sir P. You, my queen of hearts! You! My house, my wealth, my servants, myself, all are yours!

Ly. You talk unintelligibly, sir.

Sir P. Do I? Why, then, I'll speak plainer.—I am in love with you! You are a delicious creature, and I am determined to make your fortune!—I'll take you a house up in Mary-le-bone; a neat snug box; hire you servants, keep you a carriage, buy you rings, clothes, and jewels, and come and sup with you every evening!—Do you understand me now?

Ly. Perfectly, sir!

Sir P. Well, and—hay!—Does not the plan tickle your fancy? Do not your veins tingle, your heart beat, your—hay! What say you?

Ly. I really, sir, don't know what to say—except

that I cannot comply, unless a lady, whom I think it my duty to consult, should give her consent.

Sir P. What lady?—who?

Ly. Lady Peckham, sir.

Sir P. My wife! Zounds! are you mad? Tell my wife!

Ly. I shall further ask the advice of your son and daughter, who will wonder at your charity, in taking a poor orphan like me under your protection; will be happy to see themselves ruined for my sake, and will profit by the example of so venerable a father.

Sir P. Poh!—nonsense!

Ly. A little farther off, if you please, sir.

Sir P. Nearer, angel, nearer.

Ly. I'll raise the house, sir.

Sir P. Pshaw!

Ly. Help!

Sir P. My handkerchief! You sweet——

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. Lydia!—Sir!

Sir P. How now, sir?—(*Aside to* LYDIA.)—Hem! Say it was a mouse.

Edm. What is the matter, sir?

Sir P. What's that to you, sir? What do you want, sir? Who sent for you, sir?

Edm. I perceive you are not well, sir.

Sir P. Sir!

Edm. How were you taken?

Sir P. Taken!—(*Aside.*) Young scoundrel!—Take yourself away, sir.

Edm. Impossible, sir! You tremble!—your looks are disordered!—your eyes wild!

Sir P. (*Aside.*) Here's a dog!

Edm. Be so obliging, Miss Lydia, as to run and inform Lady Peckham how ill my father is.

Sir P. Why, you imp! (*Stopping* LYDIA.) Lydia,

stay where you are. You audacious!—will you be gone?

Edm. That I certainly will not, sir, while I see you in such a way.

Sir P. Way, sir!—Very well, sir, very well.

Edm. I'll reach you a chair, sir.—Pray sit down; pray cool yourself.

Sir P. Oh that I were cooling you in a horse-pond!

Edm. You are growing old, sir.

Sir P. You lie, sir!

Edm. You should be more careful of yourself.—Shall I send for a physician?

Sir P. (*Aside.*) Dammee, but I'll physic you! I'll——

Enter a Man Cook.

Cook. Your soup is ready, sir.

Sir P. Sir!

Cook. Knew your worship's hour—never made better in my life—rich and high—just to your worship's palate.

Sir P. Why, fellow, don't you see I'm very ill?

Cook. Ill, Sir Paul!

Sir P. That my eyes are wild, that I tremble, am old, and want a physician?

Cook. Lord, Sir Paul! I have been your physician for these fifteen years.

Sir P. I tell you I'm ill, and want cooling.—Ask that scoundrel else. I'm dying! so serve up your dose.

Cook. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, your worship. [*Exit.*

Sir P. (*Muttering as he goes off.*) A sly, invidious——The demure dog has a mind to her himself. Yes, yes.—Oh, dammee, pitiful Peter, but I'll fit you! [*Exit.*

Ly. You see, sir!

Edm. (*Shrugging.*) I do.

Ly. I must leave this family.

Edm. Leave!—Why, charming Lydia, will you afflict me thus? Have I not declared my purpose?

Ly. Which cannot be accomplished. You promise marriage, but your father will never consent.

Edm. Then we will marry without his consent.

Ly. Oh no; do not hope it. When I marry, it shall be to render both my husband and myself respectable and happy; not to embitter, not to dishonour both.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. A person, who calls himself Mr Dorimont, inquires for you, madam.

Ly. Heavens! can it be? Shew him up instantly. [*Exit Footman.*

Edm. You seem alarmed.

Ly. No, no; overjoyed.

Edm. Who is it?

Ly. I scarcely can tell you. A gentleman who used to visit me in the convent.

Edm. Have you been long acquainted?

Ly. Little more than two years, during which he was my monitor, consoler, and guide.

Edm. (*Seeing him before he enters.*) His appearance——

Ly. Is poor, but his heart is rich in benevolence. Pray leave us. [*Exit* EDMUND.

Enter MR DORIMONT.

Ly. (*Running to meet him*) Ah! sir.

Mr Dor. I am happy to have found you once again.

Ly. What, sir, has brought you to England?

Mr Dor. Business; part of which was to see you.

Ly. You have been always generous and kind.—Yet I am sorry you should see me thus.

Mr Dor. Why? (*Eagerly.*) What are you?

Ly. An humble dependant; a lady's companion.

Mr Dor. Alas! why did you leave the convent without informing me?

Ly. 'Twas unexpected. You had forborne your visits, and I feared death, or some misfortune. At my mother's decease, the young lady with whom I live having an affection for me, and seeing me deserted, offered to take me with her to England, promising I should rather be her friend than her companion.

Mr Dor. And has she kept her word?

Ly. On her part faithfully, tenderly.

Mr Dor. That is some consolation.

Ly. But——

Mr Dor. What?

Ly. She has a mother, who does not fail to make inferiority feelingly understand itself.

Mr Dor. (*With some emotion.*) Indeed! (*Collecting himself.*) But with whom were you in such earnest conversation when I entered?

Ly. The brother of my young lady; a gentleman worthy your esteem.

Mr Dor. And worthy yours?—You blush!

Ly. Do you blame me for being just?

Mr Dor. No. He is rich, young, and handsome.—Do you often meet?

Ly. We do.

Mr Dor. You are lovely, inexperienced, and unprotected.

Ly. Fear nothing: I shall not easily forget myself.

Mr Dor. (*Earnestly.*) I hope not. But what does he say?

Ly. That he loves me.

Mr Dor. Is that all?

Ly. No; he offers me secret marriage.

Mr Dor. Secret marriage!

Ly. I see the danger, and wish to shun it.—You may find me some place of refuge in France.

Mr Dor. Can you so easily renounce all the flattering prospects love has raised?

Ly. Yes; and not only them, but love itself, when it is my duty.

Mr Dor. Noble-minded girl! Remain where you are; nay, indulge your hopes; for know, your lover will be honoured by your hand.

Ly. Sir!—honoured!

Mr Dor. Honoured. By birth you are greatly his superior.

Ly. Can you be serious? Oh, trifle not with a too trembling heart! Why did my mother conceal this secret from me? Or, if true, why die and leave it unrevealed?

Mr Dor. There were reasons. She was not your mother.

Ly. Not! Oh, sir, you have conjured up ten thousand busy thoughts! Is my mother living?

Mr Dor. No.

Ly. My father?

Mr Dor. He is.

Ly. Why has he so long forsaken me?

Mr Dor. That must be told hereafter. Be patient; wait the event. You are acquainted, I think, with Count Connolly Villars?

Ly. He visits here.

Mr Dor. I have business with him.

Ly. Ah, sir, I fear you will meet a cool reception. Your humble appearance and his pride will but ill agree.

Mr Dor. Fear not: my business is to lower his pride.

Ly. Sir!—He may insult you.

Mr Dor. Humble though I myself am, I hope to teach him humility. To visit you, and to accomplish

this, was the purport of my journey. Adieu for the present. Think on what I have said; and though by birth you are noble, remember virtue alone is true nobility.

(LYDIA *rings. Exit* MR DORIMONT, *and enter* LUCY; *her dress more characteristic of the girl than of the woman, and her manner full of life, but tempered by the most delicate sensibility.*)

Lucy. Well, Lydia, any news for me?

Ly. Mr MacDermot has been here, with the count's compliments, but, in reality, to see if Lady Peckham were at home. You know how much he wishes to avoid her.

Lucy. Yes; and I don't wonder at it. She has just been with me, ushering her orders, as she calls it. "I desires, miss, you vill receive Sir Samooel Sheepy as your intended spouse." And so she has sent me here to be courted; and the inamorato is coming, as soon as he can take breath and courage.

Ly. But why, my dear, do you indulge yourself in mocking your mamma?

Lucy. Lydia, I must either laugh or cry; and though I laugh, I assure you it is often with an aching heart.

Ly. My dear girl!

Lucy. I hope, however, you will own there is no great harm in laughing a little at this charming Adonis, this whimsical lover of mine!

Ly. Perhaps not.

Lucy. What can his reason be for making love to me?

Ly. There's a question! Pray, my dear, do you never look in your glass?

Lucy. Um—yes; but does he never look in his glass too?

Ly. Perhaps his sight begins to decay.—But are not you alarmed?

Lucy. No.

Ly. Do not you love the count?

Lucy. Um—yes.

Ly. Well! and you know how violent and prejudiced Lady Peckham is!

Lucy. Perfectly; but I have Sir Paul on my side; and as for Sir Samuel, he was dandled so long in the nursery, and is still so much of the awkward, bashful boy, that he will never dare to put the question directly to me; and I am determined never to understand him till he does.

Ly. Here he comes.

Lucy. Don't leave me.

Enter SIR SAMUEL.

Sir S. (*Bowing with trepidation.*) Madam—hem! —madam——

Lucy. (*Curtseying and mimicking.*) Sir—hem!—sir—(*Aside to* LYDIA.) Count his bows.

Sir S. Madam, I—hem!—I am afraid—I am troublesome.

Lucy. Sir—hem!—a gentleman of your merit—hem!

Sir S. (*Continues bowing through most of the scene.*) Oh, madam, I am afraid—hem!—you are busy.

Lucy. (*Curtseying to all his bows.*) Sir—hem!——

Sir S. Do me the honour to bid me be gone.

Lucy. Surely, sir, you would not have me guilty of rudeness?

Sir S. (*Aside.*) What a blunder! Madam—hem! —I ask ten thousand pardons.

Lucy. Good manners require—hem!——

Sir S. That I should be gone without bidding.—(*Going.*)

Lucy. Sir!

Sir S. (*Aside.*) I suppose I'm wrong again.

Lucy. I didn't say so, sir.

Sir S. (*Turning quick.*) Didn't you, madam?

Lucy. A person of your politeness, breeding, and accomplishments—hem!——

Sir S. (*Aside.*) She's laughing at me.

Lucy. Ought to be treated with all reverence.—(*Curtseying with ironic gravity.*)

Sir S. (*Aside.*) Yes, she's making a fool of me!

Lucy. Sir!—Were you pleased to speak sir?—Hem!

Sir S. Hem!—not a word, madam.

Ly. This will be a witty conversation.

Lucy. I presume, sir—hem!—you have something to communicate.

Sir S. Madam?—Hem!—Yes, madam; I mean no, madam—no, nothing—hem!

Ly. Nothing, Sir Samuel?

Sir S. Hem!—Nothing, nothing.

Lucy. Then may I take the liberty, sir, to inquire—hem!—what the purport of your visit is?—Hem!

Sir S. The—the—the—Hem!—The purport is—Hem!—I—I have really forgotten.

Lucy. Oh, pray, sir, take time to recollect yourself. Hem! I am sure, Sir Samuel—hem!—you have something to say to me.—Hem!

Sir S. Yes—no, no, nothing.

Ly. Fie, Sir Samuel! Nothing to say to a lady!

Sir S. No. Hem! I never had any thing to say to ladies in my life. That is—yes, yes, I own I have something of the—the utmost—Hem!

Lucy. Indeed!

Sir S. A thing which lies at my heart. Hem!

Lucy. Mercy! Sir Samuel! Hem!

Sir S. Which I—hem!—have long——But I will take some other opportunity. (*Offering to go.*)

Lucy. By no means, Sir Samuel. You have quite alarmed me! I am impatient to hear. I am afraid you are troubled in mind. Hem!

Sir S. Why—hem!—yes, madam, rather—hem!

Lucy. I declare I thought so. I am very sorry. Perhaps you are afraid of death?

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. Yet you are not so very old.

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. But I would not have you terrify yourself too much. Hem!

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. I perceive I have guessed it.

Sir S. Madam! Hem! No, madam.

Lucy. No! What then is this important secret? Nay, pray tell me. Hem!

Sir S. Hem! N—n—n—n not at present, madam.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Samuel!

Sir S. Some other time, madam. Hem!

Lucy. And can you be so cruel to me? Can you? I declare I shall dream about you—shall think I see you in your winding-sheet, or some such frightful figure, and shall wake all in a tremble. Hem!

Sir S. A tremble indeed, madam!

Lucy. And won't you tell me, Sir Samuel?—won't you?

Sir S. N—n—n—n not at present, madam. Hem!

Lucy. Well, if you won't, Sir Samuel, I must leave you; for what you have said has absolutely given me the vapours. Hem!

Sir S. I, madam! Have I given you the vapours?

Lucy. Yes, you have, Sir Samuel, and shockingly too. You have put such gloomy ideas into my mind!

Sir S. Bless me, madam. Hem!

Lucy. Your salts, Lydia. Hem!

Sir S. I hope, madam, you—you are not *very* ill?

Lucy. Oh, I shall be better in another room. Hem!

Sir S. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes; 'tis my company that has given her the vapours. (*Aloud.*) Shall I—(*Confusedly offering his arm.*)

Lucy. No, no; stay where you are, Sir Samuel.

Sir S. (*Aside.*) She wants to be rid of me. Hem!

Lucy. Only remember you are under a promise to tell me your secret. Hem! If you don't, I shall certainly see your ghost! Remember. Hem!

[*Exit.*

Sir S. Madam, I—(*Not knowing whether to go or stay.*)—(*To* LYDIA.) Miss Lydia—Hem!

Ly. Sir.

Sir S. If you would—hem!—be so civil, I——

Ly. Oh, sir, I have the vapours as bad as Miss Lucy! [*Exit.*

Sir S. Have you? Hem! Bless me! Death, winding-sheets, ghosts! Gloomy ideas indeed. Hem! She was laughing at me; I am sure she was. Hem! All my life long have I been laughed at by young coquettish girls—yet I can't forsake 'em. Then the vapours; my old trick. I always give young ladies the vapours: I make 'em ill: They are always sick of me. Hem! 'Tis very strange that I can't learn to talk without having a word to say. A thing so common too. Why can't I give myself monkey airs; skip here and there; be self-sufficient, impertinent, and behave like a puppy, purposely to please the ladies? What! is there no such thing to be found as a woman who can love a man for his modesty? This foreign count, now, my rival, is quite a different thing. He—(*Mimicking*)—he walks with a straight back, and a cocked-up chin, and a strut, and a stride, and stares, and takes snuff, and——Yes, yes—he's the man for the ladies! [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the House of SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Ly. I cannot forget it! My father alive! and I of noble descent! 'Tis very strange! Hope, doubt, and apprehension are all in arms. Imagination hurries me beyond all limits of probability.

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. Why do you thus seek solitude?

Ly. To indulge thought.

Edm. Has your friend brought you bad news?

Ly. No.

Edm. What has he said?

Ly. Strange things.

Edm. Heavens! What?

Ly. You would think me a lunatic, were I to repeat them.

Edm. Lydia, I conjure you not to keep me on the rack.

Ly. I was enjoined silence, but I feel my heart has no secrets for you—Yet you will laugh.

Edm. Ungenerous Lydia!

Ly. Yes, you will think me mad.

Edm. Lydia, you are unjust.

Ly. Am I? Well then, I am told—Would you believe it?—I am told that my family is illustrious!

Edm. Good heavens! 'Tis true! I feel it is true! Charming Lydia, (*Kneeling,*) thus let love pay you that homage which the world, blind and malignant, denies.

Ly. Rise, Edmund. Birth can at best but confer imaginary dignity: there is no true grandeur but of mind.

Edm. Some one is coming.

Ly. Ay, ay. Get you gone.

Edm. I am all transport!

Ly. Hush! Away!

Edm. My angel! (*Kisses her hand.*)

[*Exit hastily.*

Enter Footman, introducing MR DORIMONT.

Foot. A gentleman to you, madam.

Ly. This sudden return, sir, is kind.

Mr Dor. I have bethought me. The moment is critical, and what I have to communicate of importance. Are we secure?

Ly. We are. This is my apartment. (LYDIA *goes and bolts the door.*) Have you seen the count, sir?

Mr Dor. No, but I have written to him anonymously.

Ly. And why anonymously?

Mr Dor. To rouse his feelings, wound his vanity, and excite his anger: His slumbering faculties must be awakened. Is he kind to you?

Ly. No; yet I believe him to be generous, benevolent, and noble of heart, though his habitual haughtiness gives him the appearance of qualities the very reverse.

Mr Dor. Worthy, kind girl! You were born for the consolation of a too unfortunate father.

Ly. Again you remind me that I have a father. Why am I not allowed to see him? Why am I not suffered to fly into his arms?

Mr Dor. He dreads lest his wretched and pitiable condition should make you meet him with coldness.

Ly. Oh! how little does he know my heart! Yet speak; tell me what monster was the cause of his misery?

Mr Dor. The monster Pride.

Ly. Pride!

Mr Dor. Your mother's pride, which first squandered his wealth, and next endangered his life.

Ly. How you alarm me!

Mr Dor. A despicable dispute for precedency was the occasion of a duel, in which your father killed his antagonist, whose enraged family, by suborning witnesses, caused him to be convicted of murder, obliged him to fly the kingdom, and with your mother wander under a borrowed name, a fugitive in distant countries.

Ly. Heavens! But why leave me ignorant of my birth?

Mr Dor. That, being unfortunate, you might be humble; that you might not grieve after happiness which you seemed destined not to enjoy. 'Twas the precaution of a fond father, desirous to alleviate, if not succour your distress.

Ly. Oh, how I burn to see him! Is he not in danger? Is his life secure?

Mr Dor. He himself can scarcely say. His enemies have discovered him, are hot in pursuit, and fertile in stratagems and snares: they know that justice is now busied in his behalf; but justice is slow, and revenge is restless. Their activity, I hear, is redoubled.

Ly. Guard, I conjure you, guard my father's safety. Let me fly to seek him. Conduct me to his feet.

Mr Dor. He wished you first to be informed of his true situation, lest, knowing him to be noble, you should expect to see him in all the pomp of affluence, instead of meeting a poor, dejected, forlorn old man.

Ly. His fears are unjust; injurious to every feeling of filial affection and duty. The little I have I will freely partake with him. My clothes, the dia-

monds which my supposed mother left me, whatever I possess shall instantly be sold for his relief: my life shall be devoted to soften his sorrows. Oh that I could prove myself worthy to be his daughter! Oh that I could pour out my soul to secure his felicity!

Mr Dor. Forbear! Let me breathe! Affection cannot find utterance! Oh, this melting heart! My child!

Ly. Sir!

Mr Dor. My Lydia!

Ly. Heavens!

Mr Dor. My child! My daughter!

Ly. (*Falling at his feet.*) Can it be? My father! Oh, ecstacy!

Mr Dor. Rise, my child. Suffer me to appease my melting heart. Oh, delight of my eyes! Why is not your brother like you?

Ly. My brother! Who? Have I a brother?

Mr Dor. The count is your brother.

Ly. 'Tis too much!

Mr Dor. He is not worthy such a sister.

Ly. The sister of the count!—I! Ah! Nature, thy instincts are fabulous; for, were they not, his heart would have beaten as warmly toward me, as mine has done for him!

Mr Dor. I will make him blush at his arrogance. You shall witness his confusion, which shall be public, that it may be effectual.

Ly. Would you have me avoid explanation with him?

Mr Dor. Yes, for the present. I mean to see him. Our meeting will be warm, but he shall feel the authority of a father.

Ly. If you are a stranger to him, I fear lest——

Mr Dor. No, no. He knows me, but knows not all his obligations to me. I have secretly supplied him with money, and gained him promotion, which he has vainly attributed to his personal merits. But

I must be gone. My burdened heart is eased. Once more, dear child of my affections, be prudent. I have much to apprehend; but, should the present moment prove benign, my future days will all be peace!—(*Knocking heard at the chamber door.*)

Ly. (*Alarmed.*) Who's there?

Sir P. (*Without.*) 'Tis I. Open the door.

Ly. I am busy, sir.

Sir P. Pshaw! Open the door, I tell you.

Mr Dor. Who is it?

Ly. Sir Paul.

Mr Dor. And does he take the liberty to come into your apartment?

Ly. Oh, sir, he will take any liberty he can.

Sir P. Why don't you open the door?

Mr Dor. You are surrounded by danger and temptation!

Ly. Have no fears for me, sir.

Sir P. Will you open the door, I say?

Mr Dor. Let him come in. (LYDIA *unbolts the door.*)

Enter SIR PAUL.

Sir P. What is the reason, you dear little baggage, that you always shut yourself up so carefully?

Ly. You are one of the reasons, sir.

Sir P. Pshaw! You need not be afraid of me.

Ly. I'm *not* afraid of you, sir.

Sir P. Why, that's right. I'm come to talk matters over with you. My lady's out—a-wisiting—(*Mimicking*)—the coast is clear—I have secured my graceless dog of a son. I suspect!

Ly. What, sir?

Sir P. But it won't do. Mind; take the hint—I've heard of an excellent house.

Ly. You are running on as usual, sir.

Sir P. With a convenient back door. I'll bespeak you a carriage: choose your own liveries: keep as

many footmen as you please. Indulge in every thing your heart can wish—operas, balls, routs, masquerades; Rotten Row of a Sunday; town house and country house; Bath, Bristol, or Buxton; hot wells or cold wells:——only—hem!——hay!

Ly. Sir, I must not hear such ribaldry.

Sir P. Indeed but you must, my dear. How will you help it? You can't escape me now. I have you fast. No scapegrace scoundrel of a——(MR DORIMONT *comes forward.*) And so——

Mr Dor. (*Sternly.*) And so, sir!

Sir P. Zounds! (*Pause.*) And so! (*Looking round.*) Locked up together! You were busy!

Mr Dor. Well, sir?

Sir P. Oh, very, sir. Perhaps you have a house yourself, sir?

Mr Dor. Sir?

Sir P. With a convenient back door?

Mr Dor. So far from offering the lady such an insult, sir, I am almost tempted to chastise that impotent effrontery which has been so daring.

Sir P. Hem! You are very civil, sir; and, as a return for your compliment, I am ready to do myself the pleasure, sir, to wait on you down stairs.

Ly. I'll spare you the trouble, sir.

Mr Dor. Though this lady's residence here will be but short, I would have you beware, sir, how you shock her ears again with a proposal so vile.

Sir P. Your caution is kind, sir.

Mr Dor. I am sorry it is necessary, sir. What! The head of a house! the father of a family! Oh! shame! He who, tottering on the brink of the grave, would gratify appetites which he no longer knows, by reducing the happy to misery, and the innocent to guilt, deserves to sink into that contempt and infamy into which he would plunge unwary simplicity. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Apartment of the Count, an elegant Room, with Chairs, Sofa, Glasses, Pictures, &c.

MACDERMOT *and* PICARD, *with a Letter in his hand, meeting.*

MacDer. So, Mr Picard, what have you got there?

Pic. Von lettre for Monsieur le Comte.

MacDer. Well, give it me, and go about your business.

Pic. No, I not go about my bisaness. My bisaness is to speaka to you.

MacDer. To me! And what is it you want?

Pic. *Mon argent!* My vage an my *congé!* My dismiss!

MacDer. How, man alive!

Pic. You are dee—dee *factotum* to dee count. He suffare no somebody to speaka to him, so I am come speaka to you.

MacDer. Arrah now, and are you crazy? Quit the sarvice of a count! Your reason, man?

Pic My raison is, you talka too mosh enough; he no talk at all. I follow him from France: I yet live vid him by and by four month, he no speaka to me four vord!

MacDer. What then?

Pic. Vat den!—*Je suis François, moi!* I ave dee tongue for a dee speaka; I mus speaka; I vila speaka! He not so mosh do me dee *faveur* to scold a me! I ave leave dee best madame in Paris for *Monsieur le Comte—Quelle femme!* Her tongue vas nevare still! Nevare! She scold and she clack, clack, clack, clack,

clack, from all day an all night! Oh! It was delightful to hear!

MacDer. And so you want to be scolded?

Pic. *Oui*—I love to be scold, I love to scold; to be fall out, an to be fall in—*C'est mon gout*—Dee plaisir of my life! *J'irai crever!* If I no speak I burst!

MacDer. And is it you now, spalpeen, that would chatter in the prisence of the count?

Pic. Shatter! Shatter! Ha! Vat you mean shatter?

MacDer. Have not you roast beef and plum pudding?

Pic. Vat is roas beef, vat is plom boodin, gotam! if I no speaka? I ave a dee master in France, dat starva me, dat pay me no *gage*, dat leave a me *tout en guenilles*, all rag an tattare; yet I love him better as mosh! *Pourquoi?* (*Affectionately.*) *Helas! J'étois son cher ami!* his dear fren! He talka to me, I talka to him! I laugh at his joke, he laugh *aussi*; an I am both togeder so happy as dee prince! But dee count! Oh! He as proud!—Ha!—*Comme ça.* (*Mimicking.*)

MacDer. Poh! Now—My good fillow, have patience.

Pic. Patience! *Moi!* I no patience——If I no speak, I am *enragé*—I am French—I am Picard—Ven dee heart is full dee tongue mus run! I give you varn—Let my masta speak, or I shall dismissa my masta!

MacDer. Here comes the count! Stand back, man, and hould your tongue!

(*Enter the Count, followed by two Footmen, in handsome liveries. Footmen place themselves in the back ground.* MACDERMOT *comes a little forward.*)

Count. The more I reflect on my own infatuation, the more I am astonished!

MacDer. My lord—

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Count. (*Traversing the stage.*) A man of my birth! my rank! so to forget himself!—Still she is an angel!—But the family of a cit!—A brewer's daughter!

MacDer. My lord—

Count. (*Gives him a forbidding look.*) The world contains not a woman so lovely!—Yet the vulgar, haughty, disgusting airs of the mother!—the insulting familiarity of the father!—and the free, unceremonious tone of the whole family!—I am fascinated!—Neither do they condescend to court my alliance! I must be the humble suitor: I must entreat, must supplicate permission to degrade my noble ancestors, who will abjure me, blushing through their winding-sheets!—I must petition, and fawn, and acknowledge the high honour done.—No! If I do!—Yet 'tis false! I shall, I feel I shall be thus abject.

MacDer. If—I might be so bould—

Count. Well, sir.

MacDer. A letter for your lordship.

Count. Oh!—What, from the ambassador?

MacDer. No, faith, my lord.

Count. Ha! The duchess?

MacDer. No, my lord, nor the duchess neither.

Count. (*Taking it.*) Who then, sir?

MacDer. Faith, my lord, that is more than I can say—But perhaps the letter itsilf can tell you.

Count. Sir!—Who brought it?

Pic. *Un pawvre valet* footaman, mee lor—His shoe, his stocking, his habit, his *chapeau*, vas all patch an piece. And he vas—

MacDer. (*Aside, interrupting him.*) Bo!

Count. (*Throwing down the letter, blowing his fingers, and dusting them with his white handkerchief.*) Foh!—Open it, and inform me of the contents.

MacDer. Yes, my lord.

Pic. His visage, mee lor—

Count. How now!

Pic. (*In a pitiful tone.*) Mee lor—

MacDer. 'Sblood, man!—*(Stopping his mouth, and pushing him back.)*

Count. *(Makes signs to the footmen, who bring an arm-chair forward, and again submissively retire.)* She is ever uppermost! I cannot banish her my thoughts! Do you hear?—Dismiss those—*(Waving his hand.)*

MacDer. Yes, my lord.—Hark you, spalpeens! *(Waving his hand with the same air as the count)*

[*Exeunt Footmen.*

Pic. *(Advancing.)* *Monsieur le Comte*—

Count. *(After a stare.)* Again!

Pic. I ave von *requête* to beg.

Count. Pay that fellow his wages immediately!

MacDer. I tould you so! *(Pushing him away.)* Hush! silence!

Pic. Silence! I am no English! I hate silence! I——

MacDer. Poh! Bodtheration! Be asy!—I will try now to make your pace! *(Pushes him off, and then returns to examining the letter.)*

Count. Insolent menial!—Well, sir? The contents?

MacDer. Faith, my lord, I am afraid the contints will not plase you!

Count. How so, sir?

MacDer. Why, as for the how so, my lord, if your lordship will but be plased to rade—

Count. Didn't I order you to read?

MacDer. To be sure you did, my lord: but I should take it as a viry particular grate favour, if that your lordship would but be plased to rade for yoursilf.

Count. Why, sir?

MacDer. Your lordship's timper is a little warm; and—

Count. Read!

MacDer. Well—If I must I must!—"The person who thinks proper at present to address you"—

Count. (*Interrupting.*) Sir!

MacDer. My lord.

Count. Be pleased to *begin* the letter, sir!

MacDer. Begin! Sarra the word of beginning is here—before or after—

Count. "The person?"

MacDer. Yes, my lord.

Count. Mighty odd! (*Throws himself in the arm-chair.*) Proceed, sir.

MacDer. "The person who thinks proper at present to address you, takes the liberty to inform you that your haughtiness, instead of being dignified, is ridiculous."

Count. (*Starting up.*) Sir!

MacDer. Why now, I tould your lordship!

Count. (*Traversing the stage.*) Go on.

MacDer. (*With hesitating fear.*) "The little—merit—you have"—

Count. (*With a look.*) The little merit I have? The little?—The little?—(MACDERMOT *holds up the letter.*) Go on.

MacDer. "The little merit you have—cannot convince the world that your pride—is not—is not—is not"—

Count. Is not what? (*Sternly.*)

MacDer. (*Fearful.*) "Impertinent."

Count. (*Striking* MACDERMOT.) Rascal!

MacDer. Viry well, my lord!—(*Throwing down the letter.*) I humbly thank your lordship!—By Jasus! But I'll remimber the favour.

Count. (*More coolly.*) Read, sir.

MacDer. To the divle I pitch me if I do!

Count. (*Conscious of having done wrong.*) Read, MacDermot.

MacDer. No, my lord!—MacDermot is a man!—an Englishman!—or an Irishman, by Jasus, which is better still! And by the holy poker, if but that

your lordship was not a lord now—(*Pulling down his sleeves, and clenching his fist with great agony.*)

Count. (*Carelessly letting his purse fall.*) Pick up that purse, MacDermot.

MacDer. 'Tis viry well!—Oh!—Well!—Well!—Well! (*Lays the purse on the table.*)

Count. You may keep it—MacDermot.

MacDer. What!—I touch it!—No, my lord!—Don't you think it!—I despise your guineas!—An Irishman is not to be paid for a blow!

Count. (*With increasing consciousness of error, and struggling with his feelings.*)—I—I have been hasty.

MacDer. Well, well!—'Tis viry well!

Count. I am—I—I am sorry, MacDermot.

MacDer. (*Softened.*) My lord!

Count. (*Emphatically.*) Very sorry.

MacDer. My lord!

Count. Pray forget it!—(*Taking him by the hand.*) I cannot forgive myself.

MacDer. By the blessed Mary, then, but I can.—Your lordship is a noble gentleman!—There is many an upstart lord has the courage to strike, when they know their poor starving dependants hands are chained to their sides, by writchedness and oppression; but few indeed have the courage to own the injury!

Count. I will remember, MacDermot, that I am in your debt.

MacDer. Faith, and if you do, my lord, your mimory will be better than mine!—I have lived with your lordship some years; and though *not* always a kind, you have always been a gineraus master. To be sure, *I niver before* had the honour of a blow from your lordship; but then I niver before had the satisfaction to be quite sure that, while you remimbered yoursilf to be a lord, you had not forgotten poor MacDermot was a man.

Count. Well, well! (*Aside, and his pride returning.*) He thinks he has a licence now to prate.—

There is no teaching servants; nay, indeed, there is no teaching any body a sense of propriety!

MacDer. Did your lordship spake? (*Bowing kindly.*)

Count. Give me that letter. And—take the money—It is yours.

MacDer. Your lordship will be plased for to pardon me there.—If you think proper, you may give me twice as much to-morrow—but the divle a doit I'll touch for to-day!

Count. Wait within call.

MacDer. (*Going.*) I niver before knew he was all togedther such a jewel of a master! [*Exit.*

Count. 'Tis this infernal letter that caused me to betray myself thus to my servant!—And who is this insolent, this rash adviser? May I perish if I do not punish the affront!—Here is no name!—A strange hand too!—(*Reads.*) "The friend who gives you this useful lesson has disguised his hand, and concealed his name"—Anonymous coward!—"His present intention being to awaken reflection, and make you blush at your own bloated vanity"—Intolerable! "Or, if not, to prepare you for a visit from one who thinks it his duty to lower your arrogance, and who will undertake the disagreeable task this very day."—Will he? Will he?—MacDermot!

MacDer. (*Entering.*) My lord!

Count. If any stranger inquire for me, inform me instantly.

MacDer. Yes, my lord.

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. Good morrow, count.

Count. (*Slightly bowing, and with vexation to* MACDERMOT.) Why, where are my fellows? Nobody to shew the gentleman up?

Edm. Oh! You are too ceremonious by half, count!

Count. (*With quickness.*) A little ceremony, sir, is the essence of good breeding.

Edm. Psha!

Count. Psha, sir!

Edm. Ceremony, like fringe hiding a beautiful face, makes you suspect grace itself of deformity.

Count. Do you hear, MacDermot?

MacDer. My lord!

Count. See that those rascals are more attentive.

Edm. Why, what is the matter with you, count?

Count. (*Muttering and traversing.*) Count, count!

Edm. You seem out of temper!

Count. (*Strongly feeling his own impropriety.*) Oh dear! No—No—Upon my honour, no!—You totally mistake—I assure you, you mistake. I'm very glad to see you! I am indeed! (*Taking him eagerly by the hand.*)

Edm. I'm very glad you are—though you have an odd mode of expressing your joy! But you are one of the unaccountables! Cast off this formality.

Count. (*Aside.*) Very fine! (*Biting his fingers.*) Formality, sir!

Edm. Give the heart its genuine flow!—Throw away constraint, and don't appear as if you were always on the tenter-hooks of imaginary insult.

Count. I! (*Aside.*) This is damn'd impertinent! (*Struggling to be over-familiar.*) You entirely misconceive me. My character is frank and open! No man has less constraint! I even study to be, as it were, spontaneous.

Edm. Ha, ha, ha! I perceive you do.

Count. Really, sir!—(*Aside.*) Does he mean to insult me?

Edm. I thought to have put you in a good humour.

Count. I am in a good humour, sir—I never was in a better humour, sir! Never, sir!—'Sdeath! a good humour, indeed!—Some little regard to propriety,

and such manners as good breeding prescribes to gentlemen.

Edm. Ha, ha, ha! Well, well, count, endeavour to forget the gentleman, and—

Count. Sir—No, sir: however you may think proper to act, that is a character I shall never forget.

Edm. Never, except at such moments as these, I grant, count.

Count. By—

Edm. Well gulped!—I had a sort of a message, but I find I must take some other opportunity, when you are not quite in so good a humour. (*Going.*) I'll tell my sister what——

Count. Sir—Your sister! My divine Lucy!—A message!

Edm. So—th magic chord is touched!

Count. Dear sir, I—I, I, I—I am afraid I am warm.—Your sister, you said!—I doubt I—that is—

Edm. Well, well, make no apologies.

Count. Apologies! No, sir!—I didn't mean—That is—Yes—I—My Lucy! My Lucy! What message?

Edm. Nay, I cannot well say myself. You know the mad-cap. She bade me tell you, if I *happened* (*Significantly*) to see you, that she wanted to give you a lecture.

Count. Indeed! (*Aside.*) I'm lectured by the whole family. (*Aloud.*) On what subject?

Edm. Perhaps you'll take pet again!

Count. I, sir—Take pet!—My sense of propriety, sir—(*Biting his lips.*)

Edm. Why, ay. Your sense of propriety, which, by the by, my flippant sister calls your pride, (*Count in great agitation,*) is always on the watch, to catch the moment when it becomes you to take offence.

Count. You—you are determined I shall not want opportunities.

Edm. You mistake, count—I have a friendship

for you. Why, what a forbidding stare is that now! Ay! A friendship for you.

Count. Sir—I—I am not insensible of the—honour—

Edm. Yes, you are.

Count. (*With over-acted condescension.*) Sir, you are exceedingly mistaken—Very exceedingly; indeed you are. As I am a man of honour, there is no gentleman whom I should think it a higher—that is—Upon my soul—

SIR PAUL *on the stairs.*

Sir P. Is the count at home, young man?

Foot. (*Without.*) Yes, sir.

Edm. I hear my father! We have had a fracas; I must escape! If you will come and listen to my sister's lecture, so—Good morrow! [*Exit.*

Count. 'Tis insufferable! Never, sure, did man of my rank run the gauntlet thus! No respect—No distinction of persons! But with people of this class 'tis ever so—Hail, fellow, well met!

Enter SIR PAUL.

Sir P. Ay! Hail, fellow, well met!—Hey! You jolly dog! (*Shaking him heartily by the hand.*)

Count. Hem! Good—good morrow, sir! (*Aside.*) Here is another family lecturer.

Sir P. Was not that young Mock-modesty that brushed by me on the stairs?

Count. It was your son, sir.

Sir P. Good morning, sir! (*Mimicking*) said the scoundrel, when he was out of my reach. Damme! (*With a kick*) I would have shewn him the shortest way to the bottom!—Well—Hey! You have elegant apartments here!

Count. (*With contempt.*) Very indifferent, sir.

Sir P. I shall remain in town for a fortnight, and am glad you live so near.—We'll storm the wine-cel-

lar!—I hear you are no flincher!—Hey! When shall we have a set-to? Hey! When shall we have a rory-tory? A catch, and a toast, and a gallon a man—But, hey! What's the matter?—An't you well?

Count. (*With sudden excess of affability.*) Oh, yes, Sir Paul! Exceedingly well, Sir Paul! Never better, Sir Paul!

Sir P. Why, that's right—I thought you had been struck dumb.

Count. Oh, by no means, Sir Paul;—I am very happy to see you—extremely happy——inexpressibly——

Sir P. I knew you would—What say you to my Lucy? Hey!

Count. Say! That she—She is a phœnix. (*In raptures.*)

Sir P. Damme, so she is! What is a phœnix?

Count. I adore her!

Sir P. That's right.

Count. The day that makes her mine, will be the happiest of my life!

Sir P. So it will—For I'll make you as drunk as an emperor. Hollo, there! Get your master's hat—Come, come; you shall dine with me. (*Locking him by the arm.*)

Count. Sir!

Sir P. Damme, I'll make you drunk to-day.

Count. Did you speak to me, sir?

Sir P. To you? Why, what the devil! Do you think I spoke to your footman? (*Quitting his arm.*)

Count. (*Again endeavouring to be affable.*) Oh, no, Sir Paul. No! I—Pardon me—I—I was absent.

Sir P. Absent!—I smell a rat—Your dignity took miff!

Count. No, Sir Paul; by no means—No—I—That is—I will acknowledge, I am not very much accustomed to such familiarities.

Sir P. Are you not? Then you soon must be.

Count. Sir!

Sir P. Ay, sir! A few lessons from me will cure you.

Count. Sir—I—

Sir P. I am the man to make you throw off! I'll teach you to kick your stateliness down stairs, and toss your pride, as I do my wig, behind the fire.

Count. Good breeding, sir—

Sir P. Good breeding, sir, is a blockhead, sir—None of your formal Don Glums! None of your *grand pas* for me: A friend, good fellowship, and t'other bottle—That's my motto.

Count. People of my rank distinguish——

Sir P. Damn distinctions!

Count. They make it a condition, sir—

Sir P. Indeed!—Look you, my dear count, either unbridle, or you and I are two. You tell me you love my daughter—She is the finest girl in England; and I believe the slut has taken a fancy to you. The match pleases me, because it displeases my wife: and, except when you are riding your high horse, I like you, count.—Dismount, and it's a match. If not, turn the peg, and prance! I'm your humble——

Count. (*Aside.*) I'll not endure it! Racks shall not make me bend to this.

Sir P. Lucy is a wench after my own heart!—No piping, no pining, no sobbing for her! I have a fine fellow in my eye—

Count. Sir! (*Alarmed.*)

Sir P. None of your Sir Ramrod Grumble-gizzards.

Count. By Heavens! I would cut the villain's throat who should dare impede my happiness.

Sir P. Why, ay! Damn me, now you talk!

Count. The loss of my Lucy would render me the most wretched of beings!

Enter MACDERMOT *with the hat.*

Sir P. To be sure—(*Taking him again by the arm.*) Come, come! (*Claps the Count's hat on his head.*) Dinner is waiting! I smell the haunch; it perfumes the whole street! Come along—I hate the shackles of ceremony. A smoking table, and a replenished side-board, soon put all men on a level. Your hungry and thirsty souls for me! He that enters my house always deposites his grandeur, if he has any, at the door. (*Sings.*)

"This brown jug, my dear Tom, which now foams with mild ale."

MacDer. Well said, old Toby—Oh! (*Rubbing his hands.*)

[*Exeunt. The Count making disconcerted attempts to preserve his stateliness, wishing to be familiar, scarcely knowing how to behave, and* MACDERMOT *enjoying his embarrassment.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Drawing-Room of SIR PAUL PECKHAM *elegantly furnished, but hung all round with prints, chiefly caricatures.*

EDMUND *and* LYDIA.

Edm. I shall never recover from my surprise.

Ly. Hush!

Edm. The count your brother?—My sister, my family must be informed.

Ly. Not on your life, Edmund. So implacable are his enemies, that my father informs me an exempt, bribed by them, has followed him to England.

Edm. Impotent malice! The laws will here protect him.

Ly. Oh! Who can say? The wicked cunning of such life-hunters is dreadful!—I insist therefore upon your promise.

Edm. My angel! Fear nothing! (*Kissing her hand.*)

Enter LUCY *unperceived.*

Lucy. (*Placing herself beside* EDMUND.) Turn about—Now me. (*Holding out her hand.*)

Edm. Oh, sister! I am the happiest of men!

Lucy. And you appear to be very busy too, with your happiness.

Edm. Did you but know!—

Lucy. Oh! I know a great deal more than you suspect—Not but you seem to be taking measures to inform the whole house.

Edm. Of what?

Lucy. (*Placing herself between them.*) That you two are never easy apart.

Edm. Sister—I—I must insist that you speak of this lady with—with every respect.

Lucy. Brother!

Ly. Edmund!

Lucy. (*Looking first at one and then at the other.*) Strange enough this!

Edm. Were I to tell you—

Ly. (*Aside, and making signs.*) Very well!

Lucy. Tell me what?—Why don't you tell me?

Edm. Pshaw! No, no—Nothing—I—I don't know what I am saying.

Lucy. Why, surely you don't imagine your fondness for each other is any secret?

Edm. Sister! I don't understand—Are you narrow-minded enough to suppose this young lady unworthy the hand of—

Lucy. Of my brother?—No—To call my Lydia sister—(*Taking her hand*)—is one of the things on earth I most fervently wish.

Ly. My generous friend!

Edm. My charming girl!

Lucy. But—then—

Edm. There are now no buts! It will be an honour—I say, sister, you—you don't know—In short, I must very earnestly solicit you to treat Miss Lydia with all possible delicacy—I—I—I cannot tell you more at present—But I once again request, I conjure, nay, I—

Ly. Hem!

Lucy. Hem!—Humph!

Edm. You—You understand me, sister. [*Exit.*

Lucy. Indeed I don't!—There now goes one of

your lord and masters! Take care of him—he'll make an excellent grand Turk—(*Humorously burlesquing.*) Treat Miss Lydia, I say, with all possible delicacy—And have I, Lydia, have *I* shewn a want of delicacy to my friend?

Ly. Oh, no! My heart throbs with an oppressive sense of your generous, your affectionate attention to me.

Lucy. Oppressive?—Well! This is the proudest world!

Ly. Nay, I didn't mean—

Lucy. Oh! No matter.

Ly. Have you had any conversation with the count?

Lucy. No—There has been no opportunity yet to-day—I am really afraid his pride is quite as absurd as that of my good mamma!

Ly. And your affection begins to cool.

Lucy. Um—I—I can't say that—Heigho! He has his faults.

Ly. (*Ardently.*) I hope he has his virtues too!

Lucy. So do I—But how to cure those faults?

Ly. If incurable, 'twould break my heart.

Lucy. Your ardour surprises me!—But, hush!

Enter Count.

Count. (*Bowing.*) I was afraid, madam, love would not have found so much as a moment to speak its anxieties—Nay, even now—(*Looking haughtily toward* LYDIA.)

Ly. (*Pointedly, and almost in tears.*) Sir, I—I am sensible of my own unworthiness. [*Exit.*

Lucy. That lady, sir, is my friend.

Count. Madam!

Lucy. Why are you surprised?

Count. Madam!—No—no, not surprised—There is a maxim, indeed, which says—Friendship can only subsist between equals.

Lucy. But where is the inferiority?

Count. Madam!

Lucy. You are above the poor, the pitiful idea, that wealth confers any claims?

Count. Perhaps it does not, madam. But beauty, understanding, wit—in short, mind, confers ten thousand! And in these I never beheld your peer!

Lucy. Very prettily spoken, indeed! And I am almost persuaded that you love me very dearly.

Count. Madam, I adore you!

Lucy. Yes, you are continually thinking of my good qualities.

Count. Eternally, madam! I think of nothing else.

Lucy. True—you never remember your own!

Count. Were I totally insensible of my own, madam, I should be unworthy of you.

Lucy. You admire me even in my representatives, my relations and friends! Affable to all, good-humoured to all, attentive to all; your politeness, ease, and urbanity extend to every person for whom you think my heart is any way interested! Your passions are all subservient to love!

Count. Yes, madam; subservient is the very word! They are all subservient to love.

Lucy. You never recollect the dignity of your descent, nor accuse mine of meanness: You have too much understanding to plume your thoughts with turgid arrogance; or to presume on the imaginary merit of an accident, which none but ignorance, prejudice, and folly, are so besotted as to attribute to themselves.

Count. Mankind have agreed, madam, to honour the descendants of the wise and the brave.

Lucy. They have so—But you have too much native merit to arrogate to yourself the worth of others: You are no jay, decked in the peacock's feathers: You are not idiot enough to imagine that a skin of parchment, on which is emblazoned the arms and acts of one wise man, with a long list of succeeding fools, is any honour to you! Responsible to mankind

for the use or the abuse of such talents as you feel yourself endowed with, you think only of how you may deserve greatly; and disdain to be that secondary thing, that insignificant cypher, which is worthless except from situation.

Count. The feelings of injured honour, madam, perhaps may be too irritable. They shrink from insult, and spurn at contamination! Yet honour is the source of a thousand virtues! The parent of ten thousand glorious deeds! Honour is generous, sincere, and magnanimous! The protector of innocence, the assertor of right, the avenger of wrong: Yes! Honour is the patron of arts, the promoter of science, the bulwark of government, the defender of kings, and the saviour of nations!—Indulge me then in cherishing a sentiment so noble.

Lucy. Indulge?—Applaud, you mean! Honour with you never degenerates into ostentation—Is never presumptuous—Is no boaster—Is eager to earn, but scorns to extort pre-eminence! Your honour is not that abject inflated phantom which usurps contested claims, exacts submission which it does not merit, offends, irritates, and incites disgust; nay, tarnishes even virtue itself! You do not, under the word Honour, seek a miserable cobweb covering for exorbitant pride.

Count. Madam, accusation so pointed, so—

Lucy. Nay, now! Have not I been reading your panegyric?

Enter a Footman.

Foot. My lady desires you will come to her immediately, madam.

Lucy. Very well. (*Exit Footman.*)—I am a thoughtless, flighty girl! What I say can have but little meaning—Else, indeed, I would have ventured to have given you a word of advice—But—'Tis no matter.

Count. Madam, you have stung me to the soul! If I am indeed what you describe, 'twere time I should reform.

Lucy. I must be gone.—I have, I own, been wildly picturing something to myself, which I greatly fear I could not love. [*Exit.*

Count. And is it my likeness?—Surely it cannot be! Could not love?—Excruciating thought!

[*Exit after* LUCY.

Enter EDMUND, *in haste, and* LYDIA *from an inner chamber, meeting.*

Edm. Where is the count?

Ly. This moment gone.

Edm. (*Eagerly.*) Which way?

Ly. Through that door.

Edm. (*Running, stops at the door.*) Ah! 'Tis too late! The footman is telling him.

Ly. Why are you so much alarmed?

Edm. The clouds are collected, and the storm is coming!

Ly. What do you mean?

Edm. Lady Peckham has watched her opportunity: Sir Paul has dropt asleep in his arm-chair; she has ordered your sister to her apartment, and has sent to the count to come and speak with her; that is, to come and be insulted, here in the drawing-room.

Ly. What can be done?

Edm. I know not—I dread her intolerable tongue.

Ly. Perhaps were you to retire, and, when they grow warm, to interrupt them at the proper moment, the presence of a third person might be some restraint on the workings of pride; of the violent ebullitions of which I am in great apprehension.

Edm. Had I but met the count before he had received the message!—

Ly. Here comes Lady Peckham. Be gone!

(*Exit* EDMUND.

Enter LADY PECKHAM, *followed by a Footman.*

Foot. I have delivered your ladyship's message, and the count is coming.

L. Peck. (*Swelling.*) Wery vell!—Go you about your business, feller—(*Exit Footman.*) Your company is not vanted, miss.

[*Exit* LYDIA *after* EDMUND.

Enter Count, bowing.

L. Peck. So, sir! They tells me, sir, that you and my foolish husband are colloguing together, for to marry my daughter? Is this troo, sir?

Count. (*With his usual polite haughtiness.*) If it were, madam?

L. Peck. Do you know who Miss Loocy Peckham is, sir?

Count. Not very well, madam.

L. Peck. Sir!

Count. Except that she is—your daughter.

L. Peck. And do you know who I am, sir?

Count. I have been told, madam—

L. Peck. Told, sir! Told! Vhat have you been told? Vhat have you been told, sir?

Count. That your ladyship was an honest wax-chandler's daughter.

L. Peck. Yes, sir! The debbidy of his vard, sir! A common councilman, and city sword-bearer! Had an aldermand's gownd von year, vus chosen sheriff the next, and died a lord mayor elect.

Count. With all his honours blooming on his brow.

L. Peck. And do you know, sir, that I design Sir Samooel Sheepy, sir, an English knight and barrow-knight, for the spouse of my daughter? A gentleman that is a gentleman! A purson of honour and purtensions, and not a papish Jesubite.

Count. Of his honours and pretensions I am yet to be informed, madam.

L. Peck. What, sir! Do you mean for to say, sir, or to insinivate, sir, that Sir Samooel Sheepy is not your betters?

Count. If Sir Samuel himself, madam, had put such a question to me, I would have replied with my sword; or, more properly, with my cane.

L. Peck. Cane! Wery vell, sir: I'll let Sir Samooel know that you threatens to cane him—I'll take care to report you! Cane quotha! He shall talk to you.

Count. Let him, madam!

L. Peck. Madam! madam! At every vord—Pray, sir, do you know that Sir Paul Peckham has had the honour to be knighted by the king's own hand?

Count. I have heard as much, madam.

L. Peck. Madam, indeed!—And for you for to think for to look up to my daughter.

Count. Up, madam!

L. Peck. Yes, sir—Up, sir!—Pray, sir, vhat are your purtensions?

Count. (*With great agitation.*) Madam!

L. Peck. Who are you, sir? Vhere do you come from? Who knows you? Vhat parish do you belong to?

Count. Madam, I am of a family known to history, known to Europe, known to the whole universe!

L. Peck. Ah! I believes you are better known nur trusted.

Count. The names of Connolly and Villars, madam, never before were so degraded as they have been in my person.

L. Peck. Oh! I makes no doubt but you are a purson that vould degurade any name.

Count. Insult, like what I have received from you, madam, no *man* that breathes should utter, and escape death—But you are—

L. Peck. Vhat, sir? Vhat am I, sir? Vhat am I, sir?

Count. A woman.

L. Peck. A voman, indeed! Sir, I vould have you to know, sir, as how I am a lady! A lady, sir, of his majesty's own making! And moreover, sir, don't you go for to flatter yourself that I shall bestow the hand and fortin of Miss Loocy Peckham upon any needy outlandish Count Somebody-nobody!—My daughter, sir, is for your betters!

Count. Madam, though scurril—(*Recollecting himself.*) I say, madam, though such vul—such accusations are beneath all answer—yet I must tell you that, by marrying your daughter, if after this I should sink myself so low—I say, by marrying your daughter, madam, I should confer an honour on your family, as much superior to its expectations, as the splendour of the glorious sun is to the twinkling of the worthless glow-worm.

L. Peck. Vhat! vhat!—

Enter EDMUND.

Marry come up! An Irish French foriner! Not so good as von of our parish porpers! and you—you purtend to compare yourself to the united houses of the Peckhams and the Pringles! Your family indeed!—yourn! Vhere's your settlement? Yourn! Vusn't my great uncle, Mr Peter Pringle, the cheesemonger of Cateaton Street, a major in the Train-Bands before you vus born, or thought of?

Edm. (*Aside.*) So, so! I'm too late! (*Aloud.*) Let me entreat your ladyship——

L. Peck. Vhat! Hasn't I an ownd sister at this day married to Mr Poladore Spragges, the tip-toppest hot-presser in all Crutched Friars? Isn't my maiden aunt, Miss Angelica Pringle, vorth thirty thousand pounds, in the South Sea funds, every day she rises? And doesn't I myself go to bed and get up the greatest lady in this here city? And for to purtend for to talk to me of his family! Hism!

Edm. (*Very warmly.*) I must tell you, my lady,

you strangely forget yourself, and expose your family to ridicule.

L. Peck. You must tell me, sir! Vhy, sir, how dare you have the temeracity for to come for to go for to dare for to tell me? Here's fine doings! Henpecked by my own chicken!

Edm. The count, madam, is a man of the first distinction, in his native country.

L. Peck. Vhat country is that, sir? Who ever heard of any country but England? A count among beggars! How much is his countship vorth?

Count. I had determined to be silent, madam, but I find it is impossible. (*With vehement volubility.*) And I must inform you, my family is as ancient, as exalted, and as renowned as you have proved yours to be——what I shall not repeat. That I am the heir to more rich acres than I believe your ladyship ever rode over; that my father's vassals are more numerous than your ladyship's vaunted guineas; that the magnificence in which he has lived, looked with contempt on the petty, paltry strainings of a trader's pride—and that in his hall are daily fed——(*Stops short, and betrays a consciousness of inadvertent falsehood, but suddenly continues with increasing vehemence.*) Yes, madam, are daily fed, now, at this moment, madam, more faithful adherents, with their menials and followers, than all your boasted wealth could for a single year supply.

Edm. Are, at this moment, say you, count?

Count. Sir, I—I have said.

Edm. I know you to be a man of honour, and that you cannot say what is not.

Count. I—I—I have said, sir. (*Walking with great perturbation.*)

L. Peck. You have said more in a minute nur you can prove in a year.

Edm. (*Warmly.*) Madam, I will pledge my life for the count's veracity.

L. Peck. You pledge! What do you know about the matter? I'll pledge that he has been telling a pack of the most monstrous——

Edm. Forbear, madam. Such insult is too gross to be endured almost from an angry woman. Dear count——

L. Peck. Voman again! Wery fine! Wery pretty! Voman quotha! To be called a voman by my own witals!

Count. (*Aside.*) What have I done? (*With agony.*) A lie!

L. Peck. As for you, sir, I doesn't believe von vord you say. I knows the tricks of such sham shevaleers as you too vell!

Count. (*Walking away from her.*) Torture!

L. Peck. But I'll take care to have you prognosticated.

Count. (*Aside.*) Damnation!

L. Peck. I'll have you karakatoored in your troo colours. I'll have you painted in your father's hall; you and your vooden shoe shrug and snuffle scarecrows; your half dozen lank and lean shotten herring shadows, vith the light shining through 'em, like parchment at a vorkshop vinder; grinning hunger over a dish of soup-meegur, vith a second course of frogs, and a plate of hedge-berries and crab-apples for the desert! I'll depicture you! I'll not forget your wassals!

Count. (*Aside.*) I can support it no longer. (*Going.*)

Edm. (*Catches him by the hand.*) My dear count.

Count. Sir! I am a dishonoured villain! [*Exit.*

L. Peck. There! there! He tells you himself he is a willin! His conscience flies in his face, and he owns it.

Edm. (*With great ardour and feeling.*) Madam, he is a noble-hearted gentleman. His agonizing mind deems it villainy to suffer insult so gross. Sorry am I, madam, to be obliged to tell you that, humble

though your family is, the disgrace with which you have loaded it is indelible. With anguish of heart you force me to repeat, I blush while I listen to you. [*Exit.*

L. Peck. Vhy, who ever heard the like of this here now? Here's a prodigal son! Here's a regenerate reprobate! Here's a graceless Gogmagog! To purtend as how he's ashamed of me! Me!—a purson of my carriage, connections, and breeding! I!—whose wery entrance of a ball night puts Haberdasher's Hall all in a combustion!

Re-enter the Count, deep in thought, and much agitated.

L. Peck. (*Seeing him.*) Marry my daughter indeed! Faugh! [*Exit* LADY PECKHAM.

Count. Into what has my impetuous anger hurried me? Guilty of falsehood!—I!—To recede is impossible. What! stand detected before this city madam! whose tongue, itching with the very scrofula of pride, would iterate liar in my ear! No; falsehood itself is not so foul! MacDermot.

Enter MACDERMOT.

MacDer. My lord.

Count. MacDermot, I—you—you have heard of the state which formerly my father held; of his household grandeur, of the hinds and servants whom he daily fed, and the train by which he was attended?

MacDer. To be sure I have, my lord. Here your dukes and your peers know nothing at all of style. Abroad, some hundreds starve that one may ate. But in England they have learned the trick of aich man ating for himsilf.

Count. Psha! listen. The—the misfortunes that since have befallen us are little known in this country.

MacDer. To be sure they are not, my lord.

Count. Nor—n—hem!—nor would I have them. D—d—d—a—hem!—do you understand me, MacDermot?

MacDer. My lord!

Count. I—I—I would not be exposed to the insolent taunts of upstart wealth.

MacDer. Faith then, my lord, you must not live in this city.

Count. Nay, but attend to me. I—I would—I would have them think——

MacDer. (*After waiting.*) What, my lord?

Count. (*Traversing the stage, striking his forehead, and then returning.*) MacDermot, there are situations——I say, it may sometimes be wise, at least prudent and—and—excusable——Have not you remarked, MacDermot, that Lydia——(*Short pause.*)

MacDer. Oh, to be sure I have remarked, my lord, that she is a sweet crater, that Miss Liddy.

Count. Nay, but—Her influence in the family—

MacDer. Oh yes, my lord!

Count. Now if—if—suppose you were—to take—an opportunity——Is she proud?

MacDer. Mild as mother's milk, my lord.

Count. If she were persuaded, I say——Our family misfortunes—that is—no—no—the family magnificence——Do you comprehend me?

MacDer. My lord!

Count. Psha! Damnation! [*Exit.*

MacDer. (*Stands some time amazed.*) Why, now, am I MacDermot or am I not? The devil! He would have me take an opportunity with Miss Liddy! Faith, and I would very willingly do that, and persuade her——Oh, honey! but she is not so asy to be persuaded. (*Pauses.*) To be sure he must mane something. (*Pauses again.*) Oh! *Hona mon dioul!* but I have it. Ahoo! what a thick-scul' have I been all this while. He is a little bit ashamed to be

thought poor among this tribe of Balifarnians, who have nothing but their dirty guineas to boast of. And so he would have me persuade——Oh ho! let me alone. There she goes. I will be after——Bo!—flustration! There is that Mr Edmund now, close at her heels. The young royster is always getting the sweet crater up in a corner. Take an opportunity! Sarra the opportunity there is for me to take.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The Count's Apartment.

Enter MR DORIMONT *and* MACDERMOT.

Mr Dor. Pray, sir, is the count within?

MacDer. The count, sir! And pray why may you ask?

Mr Dor. I want to speak with him, sir.

MacDer. Spake! Oh! the count is not so asy to be spoken with. Plase to deliver your message to me.

Mr Dor. Inform him I am come for an answer to my letter.

MacDer. (*Alarmed.*) Letter, sir! What, the letter brought by a shabby footman?

Mr Dor. Ay, ay. Has he read it?

MacDer. Read it! Faith, and it has been very well read. But pray, sir, now are you the writer?

Mr Dor. I am.

MacDer. (*With dread.*) Then take my advice—make your escape. 'Tis very well for you my master is not at home.

Mr Dor. (*Smiling.*) Why so?

MacDer. Why so? Man alive! have you a mind to be murdered?

Mr Dor. Fear nothing. [*Knocking heard.*

MacDer. (*With increasing terror.*) By the holy phial! but there he is! Why, will you be gone now?

Mr Dor. No, I will not.

MacDer. Marcy upon my soul! For the Lord's sake, sir! Why, sir, I tell you he'll have your blood! And won't you be gone now?

Mr Dor. No, sir.

MacDer. Lord Jasus! what will I do? If he comes into this room, here will be murder!

Mr Dor. Go, tell him I am waiting for him.

MacDer. Me tell him! I warn you to be gone. Remimber, I wash my hands of your blood. Make off, make off, I tell you, while I go and keep him to his own apartment. [*Exit.*

Mr Dor. (*To a Footman crossing.*) Hark you, young man. Tell the count, your master, that the stranger who wrote the anonymous letter to him is here, waiting for an answer.

Foot. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

Mr Dor. The fears of the servant strongly speak the anger of the master: but that was what I partly feared, and partly wished.

Count. (*Enraged without.*) Where is the rash, the audacious,

Enter Count.

the insolent wretch, who—(*Aside.*)—My father!

Mr Dor. I scarcely could have expected so kind a welcome, sir; 'tis exemplary.

Count. Passion, sir, is sometimes guilty of improprieties. Pray pardon me.

Enter MACDERMOT *behind, in trepidation.*

Count. I imagined—(*Seeing* MACDERMOT.) How now, sir? Be gone!

Mr Dor. Why so? Let him stay.

Count. Be gone! or——

Mr Dor. Stay, I say.

Count. And do you hear? I am not at home.

MacDer. (*Aside, and going.*) Oh Lord! Oh Lord! Here will be murder! [*Exit.*

Mr Dor. What should that mean, sir?

Count. Sir! There are reasons. I ought not to expose my father's safety.

Mr Dor. Rather own, you ought not to blush at your father's poverty. Is this my reception? This the warm welcome of a duteous son?

Count. 'Tis so sudden. Yet my heart feels an affection——

Mr Dor. Which is stifled by your vanity. Your father is contemned, because he is unfortunate.

Count. No, sir; I do not merit a reproach so cruel! Contemn my father! You know me not. Tell me, which way can I prove my respect and love.

Mr Dor. By openly acknowledging me; not by concealment; not by disavowing me in the day of my distress.

Count. Think, sir, of your own safety.

Mr Dor. What danger is there with people of honour? Present me to the family of Sir Paul.

Count. Impossible, sir.

Mr Dor. (*Sternly.*) Impossible!

Count. Let me conjure you not to be too precipitate. You know not the vulgar pomp of new-made gentry, whose suffocating pride treats indigent merit, nay, birth itself, with the most imperious disdain.

Mr Dor. Talk not of their pride, but of your own! You complain of others haughtiness!—you! in whom the vice is so intolerable, that you willingly would disown your father!

Count. Sir, you wrong me.

Mr Dor. But, determined to be known for what I am, since you refuse, I'll introduce myself.

Count. For Heaven's sake, sir! I entreat, I supplicate, on my knees I conjure you to forbear!

Mr Dor. Yes; pride, kneeling, conjures a father in poverty to suffer himself to be disclaimed. Your mother's pride was my house's downfal; this she has bequeathed to you.

Count. Sir! (*Starts up at hearing.*)

Sir P. (*Without.*) I tell you I know he is at home.

MacDer. (*Without.*) Upon my soul, Sir Paul—

Sir P. Zounds! why, I saw him from my own window.

Count. (*Alarmed.*) Here is Sir Paul! You know not, sir, how much is at stake. I have not time to tell you now; but let my entreaties——

Mr Dor. Oh, how humble are the proud! But remember, I consent only on condition that you restrain your arrogance. If, while I am present, any symptom——(*Retiring back.*)

Enter SIR PAUL.

Sir P. 'Sblood! I knew you were at home. But to instruct servants how to lie with the most cool-

composed, and barefaced impudence, is one branch of modern education.

Count. I am sorry, Sir Paul—

Sir P. Pshaw! damn apologies. I have good news for you.

Count. Sir!

Sir P. I do believe, (God forgive me!) that my wife is growing reasonable.

Count. Does she consent?

Sir P. Yes, to permit you to ask her pardon.

Count. Sir! Ask pardon?

Mr Dor. (*Advancing.*) Yes, sir, ask pardon.

Sir P. Hem! (*Aside.*) Zounds! again! Why, what the plague can he do here?

Mr Dor. Your servant, sir.

Sir P. Sir, your very humble.

Count. (*Aside, and alarmed.*) What can this mean?

Mr Dor. You seem surprised, sir.

Sir P. Yes; you have a trick of taking people by surprise.

Count. (*Aside.*) Does he know him?

Sir P. (*Aside, and then to the Count.*) Odd enough! Who is this queer old fellow?

Count. (*Aside.*) All is safe. (*Aloud.*) Sir, the—the gentleman—(*Aside.*) What shall I say? (*To* SIR PAUL.) A gentleman, sir, who——

Sir P. A gentleman!

Count. Yes, that is——

Sir P. What, some poor relation, I suppose?

Count. Yes, sir, a relation. The—the—family estates have been under his management.

Sir P. Oh! your steward?

Count. No, not absolutely my—my steward—

Sir P. What, your land bailiff, then?

Count. No, sir, no; that is——

Sir P. Does not seem to have made his fortune by his office! A little weather-beaten.

Count. He is a man of the strictest probity, sir.

Sir P. Nay, his appearance is the pledge of his honesty.

Mr Dor. (*Aside.*) I can perceive he is practising deceit. Oh vanity! But I will restrain my anger. The moment of open punishment is not yet come.

Count. (*Crossing to his father.*) Let me request you, sir, not to reveal yourself.

Mr Dor. (*Dryly.*) Well, sir.

Count. (*Returning to* SIR PAUL.) His economy and good management are equal to his fidelity.

Sir P. (*Aside.*) Confounded odd all this though. (*Aloud.*) Well, count, I have exerted my whole authority with Lady Peckham; and her son Edmund, who has more influence over her than any body else, is your friend. So be wary, do your duty, and the day is your own.

Count. My duty, sir!

Mr Dor. Yes, sir, your duty, sir.

Sir P. (*Aside.*) A damned strange fellow. (*Aloud.*) Is it not your duty, count, to serve yourself?

Mr Dor. And would you contend about a word?

Sir P. Very true, sir. You seem a—a plain-spoken —a—hem!

Mr Dor. (*Significantly.*) Yes, I think it *my* duty to tell vice and folly the truth.

Sir P. Hem! You hear, count?

Mr Dor. His punctilious pride is contemptible.

Count. (*Half forgetting himself.*) Sir!

Mr Dor. And sir! I repeat: Do your duty, sir.

Sir P. (*Aside.*) The most unaccountable—hem!

Count. (*Aside.*) I am on the rack! He will betray himself.

Sir P. (*To the Count.*) The old gentleman does not mince matters.

Count. (*Aside to his Father.*) You will ruin me.

Mr Dor. Do as he requires, or I will feign no longer.

Sir P. Lady Peckham is expecting you. Come,

come; try whether you cannot put on a winning submissive air.

Count. (*Aside.*) I shall burst!

Mr Dor. Submissive, sir!—Remember.

Count. I shall not forget, sir.

Sir P. You approve my advice, don't you, sir?

Mr Dor. Entirely.—The lesson you give him, sir, is a useful and a necessary one. I know him!

Count. (*Aside.*) Fiends!

Sir P. What, sir—you—have lived long in the family?

Mr Dor. Sir!

Sir P. Nay, don't be affronted.

Count. (*To* SIR PAUL.) Let us be gone, sir. I am ready to attend you.

Sir P. (*Aside.*) The bluntest, drollest——

Count. We are losing time, sir.

Sir P. Well, well; in a moment. (*To* MR DORIMONT.) Pray, under favour, what may be the amount of the count's rent-roll?

Mr Dor. Sir! His rent-roll, sir!

Sir P. Ay, his rent-roll; the nett produce of his estates?

Mr Dor. Why that question to me, sir?

Count. (*Coming between them.*) For Heaven's sake, Sir Paul, let us go.

Sir P. 'Sblood! what a violent hurry you're in all of a sudden.

Count. (*Endeavouring to force him away.*) Lady Peckham is waiting, sir. I beg, I entreat——

Sir P. (*Aside.*) The mystery thickens.

Mr Dor. Pray, sir, has the count——

Count. (*Interrupting.*) For the love of mercy, sir, answer no questions; hear none, ask none. I am frantic!

Mr Dor. (*To the Count.*) Silence, sir. (*To* SIR PAUL.) Has the count ever talked of his estates?

Sir P. Oh yes.

Count. (*Aside.*) Damnation!

Mr Dor. And told you the amount?

Sir P. No—no—But, as you—

Count. I must insist, sir, on going. (*To* SIR PAUL.)

Mr Dor. I'm not prepared, sir, just now to answer your question, of the rent roll. I have business, and must leave you; but I will shortly give you the information you require. In the mean time, young gentleman, think on what has passed! Observe Sir Paul's advice, and act as becomes you. Put off your vanity—Be humble, and know yourself. [*Exit.*

Count. (*Aside fervently.*) Thank Heaven he is gone!

Sir P. Your steward is an odd one!

Count. Sir—I—I tell you he is not my steward.

Sir P. No!

Count. No, sir.

Sir P. What is he then?

Count. Sir—I—

Sir P. I thought you taught every body to keep their distance; but he treats you with as little ceremony as—(*Aside*)—as he did me.

Count. Yes, sir; people do take very unaccountable liberties.

Sir P. But what brought him here?

Count. Sir—He—Business, sir.

Sir P. Oh, the family estates.

Count. And pray, sir, what do you know of him?

Sir P. I—Nothing.

Count. You appear to be acquainted.

Sir P. Um—No, no.

Count. You had seen him before.

Sir P. Hem! Yes, I had seen him. Come, let us be going.

Count. But permit me to ask.

Sir P. Pshaw! Come, come—Lady Peckham is waiting.

Count. I must own, Sir Paul, I meet with many mortifications. Your daughter is an angel. But there are certain things to which a man of my rank must not, cannot stoop. Do you, Sir Paul, come to an agreement with your lady, and I am ready.—*(Calls.)* MacDermot!—I'll return in a moment. *(Retires.)*

Sir P. Now, if the demon of ambition did not possess me, I should never truckle to the self-sufficient airs of this man of rank! He has put a spell upon me!—I'll break with him this moment—Yet, if I do that, all is over. My authority is gone! Madam will be triumphant; and then farewel to submission! —Beside, the honour of the alliance! Nobility! Precedence! A family so famous! 'Sblood! Who knows but my grandson may be a marshal of France? *(To the Count, who returns.)* Come, come, count; let us be gone. You must make your peace with my madam.

Count. Solicitation, Sir Paul, does not become me; it is a thing I have not been accustomed to. Do you speak for me. Say all, say every thing you please. Your mediation will, I presume, be sufficient.

Sir P. *(Quite angry.)* Damn me if this is not beyond all human patience! After all I have done in your behalf! What! Would you have me and my whole family approach your footstool, there present my daughter, and kneeling beg your highness to accept her? No, my haughty count! Either my daughter is worth asking for, or not worth having. Carry your pomp to a better market; I'll stoop to it no longer. Your servant, sir! [*Exit.*

Count. *(Following.)* Nay, Sir Paul—Must I endure this? Must I? I! The descendant of an ancient race! The rightful lord of a thousand vassals! Ought I to cringe in supplicatory baseness, use servile dishonourable adulation, bend to sufflated wealth, act

the parasite to new-fledged pride, and petition where I should command? No! Earth should hide me rather! But that love, imperious love hurries me forward, with impulse irresistible! What! Wait, and fawn on madam, and mince, and simper, and act the skipjack, and chatter to her parrot, and be of her opinion, and fetch and carry, and praise her taste, and join her scandal, and laugh when she laughs, and kiss her monkey!—And to whom?—Oh! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Changes to the House of SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

MACDERMOT *and* LYDIA.

MacDer. Oh, yes! Stabling for a hundred horses! Open house all the year about! Sarvants five-and-twinty to the score; all making work for one another!

Ly. Then the count, your master, should be immensely rich.

MacDer. Should be? To be sure he is. Don't I tell you—

Ly. Yes; you tell me one thing at night, and another in the morning—You had forgotten the colonel's pay!—And the secret supplies!

MacDer. (*Aside.*) Faith, and so I had!

Ly. And pray was this all your own invention?

MacDer. Why, as to that—And is it me, now, that you would have to betray my master?

Ly. What, then, he bid you spread this report?

MacDer. Arrah now, did I say that?—Did I say that?—I tell you he bid me no such thing!—What, and did you think, now, you could get that out of

me? By St Patrick, but I would bite off my tongue, if it should dare to blunder out one word against so good a master!—

Ly. (*Aside.*) Honest, affectionate fellow!

MacDer. (*Aside.*) Oh! Blarney!—She wants to be too cunning for me, the sweet crater! And so, for fear of—Miss Liddy, your servant. [*Exit.*

Ly. I almost love him myself, for his love to his master.

Enter SIR PAUL, *followed by* EDMUND.

Sir P. I tell you, I have done with him. He is a pompous, insolent coxcomb! The Great Mogul himself is a fool to him!

Edm. All men have their foibles, sir.

Sir P. Damn his foibles. I have enough to do with my own! And, do you hear, sir? (*Significantly.*) Don't let me be troubled with any of your foibles either! You understand me. (*Looking at both.*) I'll not be trifled with. [*Exit.*

Ly. What has put him into so ill a humour?

Edm. The cursed supercilious haughtiness of the count. He has insulted Sir Samuel Sheepy, too!

Ly. I am sorry for it; but that's a trifle.

Edm. You are mistaken. Sir Samuel's resentment is very high; and, notwithstanding the servility of his manner, is more to be apprehended than you imagine.

Ly. Surely you do not expect a challenge?

Edm. Nay, my love, I would not wish to terrify you.

Ly. But you have terrified me!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Well, brother, have you succeeded with my mamma?

Edm. I believe so—I can't tell—Where is the count?

Lucy. I hear him on the stairs.

Edm. Well, warn him to be careful.

[*Exit, with chagrin.*

Lucy. What's the matter?

Ly. The old story! The count's pride. If he should quarrel again with Lady Peckham, all will then be over!

Lucy. You have put me quite in a tremor!

Enter the Count. Bows.

Lucy. (*Going.*) I will inform my mamma, sir, that you are here; and she will be with you immediately.

Count. May I not, madam, be indulged with one previous word?

Lucy. Yes, sir; one, and but one. Instead of conciliating, I find your manners offend and disgust every one. Either cast away your *hauteur*, regain the affections and consent of my friends, and above all make your peace with Lady Peckham, or this shall be the last meeting of our lives! [*Exit.*

Ly. Are you aware, sir, of your danger? Sir Samuel, Sir Paul, Lady Peckham, all affronted! Nay, your best friend, Edmund, has this moment left the room to avoid you! Oh! Think on that lovely lady! And if you have any affection for her, for yourself, or for your father—recal your reason, discard your folly, and act with a little common sense! [*Exit.*

Count. This is strange!—My father?—She know my father?—And why am I schooled and tutored thus? What have I done? What is it they expect from me?—Do I indeed offend and disgust?—Which way? Has not love induced me to overlook all the high distinctions which honour holds sacred? Nay, am I not now come on the most abject of errands?—Yet, to lose her—The last meeting of our lives!—They will absolutely drive me mad among 'em!

Enter LADY PECKHAM.

Count. Madam—(*Bowing*)—When I last had the honour—of a—an interview with your ladyship, I—I am afraid—I might possibly be inadvertently betrayed into—some warmth.

L. Peck. Vhy, sir, seeing as how my son tells me you are a real nobleman, and not von of the rifraff fortin-hunting fellers, if so be as you thinks fit to make proper 'pologies, vhy, sir, I—I—

Count. To a lady, madam, every apology may be made. Any concessions therefore—

L. Peck. Oh, sir, as for that there, I vants nothing but vat is right and downright. And I supposes, sir, you are wery villin to own that an outlandish foriner must think himself highly honoured, by a connection with an English family of distinction. Because that I am sure you cannot deny. And that it vus a most perumptery purceedin in you, being as you are but a Frenchman, or of an Irish generation at best, to purtend to the hand and fortin of Miss Loocy Peckham, vithout my connivance.

Count. Madam!

L. Peck. As I tells you, sir, I am upright and downright. So do you, or do you not?

Count. Madam!—I am ready to acknowledge that the charms of your daughter's mind, and person, are equal to any rank!

L. Peck. Her mind and purson, indeed! No, sir! Her family and fortin!—And I believes, sir, now you are come to your proper senses, you vill own too that no outlandish lord, vhatever, can uphold any comparagement vith the Peckham family and connections!

Count. (*With great warmth and rapidity.*) Madam, though I am ready to offer every excuse which can reasonably be required, for any former inadvertency; yet, madam, no consideration whatever shall

lead me—I say, madam, my own honour, a sense of what is due to my ancestors, myself, and to truth—that is, madam—No! The world, racks, shall not force me to rank my family with yours.

L. Peck. Vhy, sir? What is it that you are talking of? Rank my family vith yourn, indeed! Marry come up! No, to be sure! I say rank! I knows wery vell vhat is my doo: and that there, sir, is the thing that I vould have you for to know! And I insist upon it, sir, that you shall know it; and shall own that you knows it; or, sir, I rewoke every thing I have condescended to specify vith my son! So do you, sir, or do you not?

Count. Madam—What, madam?

L. Peck. Do you depose, that outlandish foriners are all beggars, and slaves; and that von Englishman is vorth a hundred Frenchmen?

Count. Madam—Whatever you please. (*Bows.*)

L. Peck. Oh! Wery vell!—And do you purdict that this here city is the first city in the whole vorld?

Count. I—I believe it is, madam.

L. Peck. Oh! Wery vell!—And that the Moniment, and the Tower, and Lunun bridge, are most magnanimous and superfluous buildings?

Count. Madam—

L. Peck. I'll have no circumbendibus! Are they, or are they not?

Count. Your ladyship is pleased to say so. (*Bows.*)

L. Peck. To be sure I does! Because I knows it to be troo! And that the wretches in forin parts are all fed upon bran; seeing as how there is no corn!

Count. As your ladyship thinks! (*Bows.*)

L. Peck. And that the whole country could not purwide von lord mayor's feast!

Count. I—Certainly not; madam: they have few turtle, and no aldermen.

L. Peck. Ah! A pretty country, indeed! No al-

dermen! And that it would be the hite of pursumption, in you, for to go for to set yourself up as my equal? Do you own that?

Count. (*Passionately.*) No, madam!

L. Peck. Sir!

Count. No force, no temptation shall induce me so to dishonour my great progenitors!

L. Peck. Vhy, sir!

Count. My swelling heart can hold no longer! Honour revolts at such baseness! Patience itself cannot brook a fallacy so glaring! No! Though destruction were to swallow me, I would assert my house's rights, and its superior claims!

L. Peck. Wery vell, sir! Wastly vell, sir! And I vould have you for to know, sir, vhile my name is my Lady Peckham, I vill dissert my house's rights, and claims! That I despises all!—Ha, ha!—Ha! Wery fine, indeed! Am I to be sent here to be hectored, and huffed, and bluffed, and bullied, and bounced, and blustered, and brow-beat, and scoffed, and scouted, and—Ha!

Count. (*Recovering his temper, and interceding.*) Madam—

L. Peck. I a brought my hogs to a fine market! But I'll let 'em know who's at home!

Count. My warmth, madam—

L. Peck. Your honour and glory, indeed! And for to purtend for to send for me here, to palaver me over, as I supposed——

Count. I am ready to own, madam—

L. Peck. But I'll rid the house of you! I'll take good care you shall have no daughter of mine! You may post off to your father's hall, and there starve in state. Varm it with a blaze of dried leaves, and stop up the gaps in the shattered vinders, and old groaning doors, vith clay; then send your shivering wassals, that stand jabbering behind your von-armed vooden chair, to skin the sheep that died of hunger and the rot, to make you a varm vinter surtout!

Count. (*Still interceding.*) Madam—

L. Peck. My daughter, indeed! I'll karakatoor you! [*Exit.*

Count. Flames and fury! (*Following, is met by* SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY, *who shuts the door after him, and will not suffer the Count to pass.*) How now, sir!

Sir S. (*Bowing.*) Sir, your humble servant.

Count. What does this mean, sir? Let me pass.

Sir S. A word or two first, if you please, sir.

Count. Let me pass! (*Putting his hand to his sword.*)

Sir S. (*Bowing, but resolutely guarding the door.*) Sir, I must humbly entreat—

Count. Damnation!—What is it you want with me, sir? Who are you, sir?

Sir S. My name is Sheepy, sir. (*Bowing.*)

Count. Sheepy? (*Aside.*) So, so, so! Hell and the devil! At such a moment as this!

Sir S. I am told, sir, I have some obligations to you, which it becomes me to discharge.

Count. Well, sir.

Sir S. Not quite so well, sir, as I could wish. (*Bowing.*)

Count. (*Aside.*) Was ever man so tormented?

Sir S. I am informed, sir, that you have condescended to mention me, in my absence.

Count. And so, sir?

Sir S. You did me an honour, sir. (*Bowing.*)

Count. Either speak your business, and suffer me to pass, or I will nail you to the door!

Sir S. Dear sir, you are so warm! (*Bowing.*)—I have been told you were so good as to threaten to cane me.

Count. Ay, sir! By whom?

Sir S. By Lady Peckham, sir.

Count. Indeed—Well; suppose it.

Sir S. 'Twas kind of you!—Unluckily, I have not

been much used to threatening messages, and am really afraid I shall not be very prompt at submission.

Count. Oh, do not doubt yourself, sir.

Sir S. Humble though I am, I do not find that a swaggering look—(*Bowing.*)

Count. Sir! (*With his hand to his sword.*)

Sir S. Moderate your anger, kind sir—I have a petition to you. (*Putting on his white gloves.*)

Count. Damn your sneer, sir! Speak!

Sir S. Bless me, sir! You are so warm! It is only that you would kindly do me the favour either to cut my throat, or suffer me to cut yours. (*Draws, and flourishes.*)

Count. (*With his hand to his sword.*) Are you mad, sir? Do you recollect where you are? In whose house?

Sir S. Gadso! True, sir! I should be sorry to be interrupted—Luckily, my carriage is at the door; and I know a snug room in a neighbouring tavern, where this business may be effectually settled, as quietly, as coolly, and as privately as possible.

Count. 'Twere well for you, sir, had you chosen another opportunity—But come!

Sir S. Oh! sir, I know my place—After you! (*Bows.*)

Count. Away, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Changes to the Count's Apartment.

A considerable noise of hasty footsteps without, and voices at some distance calling—"Here! Here!—This way!—Up, up!—Follow!"

Enter MR DORIMONT, *abruptly.*

Mr Dor. I am pursued, beset, and cannot escape!

Enter MACDERMOT.

MacDer. Blood and thunder! Why, what's all this? Oh! and is it you, sir?

Mr. Dor. Where is the count?

MacDer. Faith, and that is more than I can tell. (*Noise approaching*—"Here, here, I tell you! This room!") Why, what the divle—

Mr Dor. I am hunted! My liberty, perhaps my life is in danger!

MacDer. Why, sure the count would not—

Mr Dor. Here! Take, hide this packet from the eyes of my pursuers: Don't lose it; but if you have any sense of worth and honesty, deliver it safe into the hands of Sir Paul Peckham!

MacDer. Niver fear me, honey.

Enter an Exempt and two Bailiffs.

Ex. That's the man. Seize him!

First Bail. Sir, you are our prisoner.

Mr Dor. On what authority, sir?

First Bail. Authority, sir! The authority of law, sir.

Mr Dor. For what crime?

First Bail. As to crime, sir, I can't tell; but for a trifling debt of fifty thousand pounds.

Mr Dor. At whose suit

Ex. At mine, sir.

Mr Dor. Yours? Vile wretch! Gentlemen, he is a spy! the creature of a foreign court! I never had dealings with him in my life!

First Bail. We know nothing of that, sir. He has sworn to the debt.

Ex. No parleying; take him away.

First Bail. Ay, ay. Come, sir. (*They all three forcibly drag him out.*)

Mr. Dor. (*Going and without.*) Help! Rescue! False imprisonment!

MacDer. Why, what is all this now?—Poor ould gintleman.

(*Noise without at a distance*—"Rescue! Rescue! Help!")

MacDer. Where is my shillalee?—Oh, by St Peter and his crook, but I will be one among you, scoundrels. [*Exit, running.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The House of SIR PAUL PECKHAM.

Enter LYDIA *agitated,* EDMUND *following.*

Edm. Be pacified: you are too much alarmed.

Ly. If Sir Paul should have let them pass, what dreadful consequences may have followed! Where can he be?

Edm. He is here!

Enter SIR PAUL.

Ly. Oh, sir!—Where are they?—Has any thing happened?

Sir P. Happened!—Damme! I could not believe my own ears!—A silky Simon!—The count was in a right humour—'Sblood! I had a great mind to have let him kill the old fool.

Ly. Then they have not fought? Are they safe, sir?

Sir P. Yes, yes; they are safe enough—But do you know the amorous swain, his blood being heated, could only be pacified on condition that he might have another interview with Lucy!—I'm glad on't! I'll go and give her her lesson.

Edm. Oh, sir, leave him to my sister, she needs no instructions.

Sir P. No?—Gad, I believe not! She's my own girl! But clear the coast; he is coming.

Edm. I will go to Lady Peckham; and do you, Lydia, watch for the count.

Sir P. Ay, ay. He is suddenly grown humble; apologized to me, and promised to come and plead with my lady. But away.

[*Exeunt* EDMUND *and* LYDIA, *and*

Enter SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY.

Well, Sir Samuel, you are here!

Sir S. Yes, sir. (*Aside.*) And I half wish I was any where else, already.

Sir P. And so you absolutely have the courage to attack my Lucy? Ha, ha, ha! Why, you are quite a hero! You fear neither man nor woman!

Sir S. (*Aside.*) I wish I didn't.

Sir P. Nay, but don't begin to look so pitiful! She'll be here in a minute. Don't flinch: Stand to your guns! She'll not easily strike! Ha, ha, ha! Die hard, my old boy! [*Exit.*

Sir S. What is the matter with me? I declare he has talked me into a tremble! Why should I be so terrified at a harmless woman? I can't help it! A pair of beautiful eyes are flaming swords, which no armour can resist.

Enter LUCY, *cheerfully.*

Lucy. So, Sir Samuel!

Sir S. Bless me!—My heart is in my mouth!

Lucy. You seem taken by surprise.

Sir S. Madam—Hem!—No, madam—Yes, madam. (*With his usual bows.*)

Lucy. My papa informed me you were waiting, purposely to disclose this important secret.

Sir S. Madam—Hem!—Yes, madam—

Lucy. Do you know that I have had you in my mind I don't know how often, since I saw you?

Sir S. Hem!—Have you, madam?

Lucy. Yes, I have—'Tis a pity, nay indeed a shame, that so famous an English family as that of the Sheepy's should become extinct.

Sir S. Hem!—There is no danger of that, madam.

Lucy. No!—Why, it is too late in life for you to marry, Sir Samuel.

Sir S. Hem!—Yes, madam. No, madam.

Lucy. Indeed! So you—Well! I should like to know your choice—Some staid body, I imagine.

Sir S. Madam—Hem!—

Lucy. But I would not have her too old, and disagreeable.

Sir S. Hem! I can assure you, madam—She—Hem!—She is a very beautiful young lady.

Lucy. You surprise me!—Oh! Then perhaps she is some low-born girl, who has more pride than understanding, and is willing to sacrifice her youth, and beauty, to the silly vanity of riding in a coach?

Sir S. Quite—Hem!—Quite the contrary, madam.

Lucy. Then she must be poor, and must think of marrying you for the sake of your riches, hoping you will die soon.

Sir S. Madam—Hem! She is very rich.

Lucy. Is it possible!

Sir S. And I should flatter myself would not expect me to die soon.

Lucy. Oh, but she will! Young women never marry old men, but with a wish to dance over their graves.

Sir S. Hem!

Lucy. Perhaps the poor girl may—may have made a *faux pas*.

Sir S. Hem! Her virtue is unspotted, madam.

Lucy. You amaze me! Young, rich, beautiful, and virtuous! What can her reason be for making choice of you? Why does not she rather marry some youth, whose rare qualities resemble her own?—Oh! I've found the secret at last! She's an idiot.

Sir S. Hem! No, madam——No——Hem!——I am afraid she has too much wit!

Lucy. Nay then, Sir Samuel, you are the most fortunate gentleman I ever heard or read of!—But are you sure she is in love with you?

Sir S. Hem!—N—Not very, madam.

Lucy. No!—Oh ho! I have unriddled it at last! You have been bargaining for her with her father, or her mother, or—Ay, ay! The poor young lady's consent has never been asked!—And would you be so selfish as to seek your own single gratification, and be contented to see her condemned to misery, pining to death for the youth she loves, and justly detesting the sight of you, as the wicked unfeeling author of her wretchedness?

Sir S. Hem! (*Looking toward the door.*) Madam, I—Hem!—I wish you a good evening.

Lucy. (*Preventing his going.*) Another word, Sir Samuel. Have you ever talked to the young lady on the subject?

Sir S. Hem! I—Hem!—I have and—Hem! I have not.

Lucy. You never made a direct proposal?

Sir S. Hem! No, madam.

Lucy. But why?

Sir S. I, I—Hem!—I can't very well tell.

Lucy. But I can——With much folly and depravity, there is still some virtue in you.

Sir S. Madam! (*Looking how to escape.*)

Lucy. Though you could form so unjust a project, you never had the courage to insult the lady by an avowal of your guilt.

Sir S. Hem! Guilt, madam!

Lucy. Yes, sir, guilt—However, sir, she has perfectly understood your insinuations.

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. She has infinite respect for filial duties.

But, though she would beware of offending her parents, I know her to be equally determined never to entail misery on herself; nor to accept a husband whom she could neither esteem, admire, nor love.

Sir S. Madam—I—Hem!—Your servant, madam.

Lucy. (*Between him and the door.*) Not till you first promise—

Sir S. (*Forgetting his fear.*) I'll promise any thing, madam.

Lucy. That you will not render yourself more ridiculous, by persevering in so absurd, so unjust a pursuit.

Sir S. No, madam! I'm quite ridiculous enough already!

Lucy. Nay, more, that you will not seek some less friended, more enslaved, or more timid young creature, whom your misapplied wealth might command.

Sir S. Whatever you please, madam!

Lucy. But that you will rather apply your superfluous hoards to the protection of youthful innocence.

Sir S. Suffer me but to depart, madam, and I will bequeath my estates in perpetuity as you shall direct; I'll entail them on the Magdalen; or I'll advertise for marriageable men and maids, and you shall portion out my money among them! I'll—I'll do any thing, except marry, or go a-courting!

Lucy. Why, then, Sir Samuel—(*Kissing his hand*)—There—That be your reward.

Sir S. Madam—Your humble servant.

[*Exit abruptly.*

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Sir Samuel: This is the first time he ever forgot his bow.

Enter the Count.

Well, sir! have you effectually made your peace with my mamma?

Count. I have done my endeavours, madam—Would I were at peace with myself!

Lucy. And are you still, sir, under the dominion of prejudice so weak? Do you still repent of what you so long have deemed your condescension?

Count. Far otherwise, madam. There are beings so peculiarly favoured of Heaven, and endowed with such high perfections, both of body and of mind, that they are superior to all the distinctions of men, among whom they walk angels upon earth! You are one of these! And my misery is, I never can deserve you!

Lucy. You may have stumbled, but this self-condemnation shews it was but to rise with tenfold strength. Persevere, and we will be severed only by death.

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. At length, my dear count, Lady Peckham is pacified. To stoop to her ill-placed pride, to overlook her prejudice, and to petition as you did, was noble in you. I have seconded your efforts, have pledged myself for your honour, and guaranteed your veracity.

Count. Then, sir, you have struck a dagger to my heart! I have been guilty of falsehood! That very pride, and that exalted, or I fear extravagant, sense of honour, which should have preserved me from a stain so hateful, have dashed me down the precipice!

Edm. You amaze me!

Count. 'Tis true, 'twas inadvertent; but rankling vanity, strengthened by a purer motive, the trembling alarms of love, induced me to persist; nay, a second time to aid deception.

Lucy. You did wrong—But which of us can say they never erred?

Edm. Ay! Who will stand forth and affirm, that, amid the rude whirl, the confused doubts, or the terrors of passion, they never once have been betrayed into your crime? For a crime I own it is; and with consequences so wide, so pernicious, and so fatal,

that, when it shall be extirpated from the earth, that moment man will be perfect! But, in this poor world's present state, it is so far venial, that (painful, humiliating thought!) no—the noblest, the purest of us all, cannot strike his heart, and say—I never was a liar!

Lucy. Frail as we are, and hourly as the arts of falsehood are practised upon us, to our detriment, and often to our ruin, those only are most free from guilt, who shake contagion soonest from them; and, by the next sublime effort of truth, scorning to shrink from shame, which is their due, in some sort turn the vice itself to virtue.

Edm. But what have you said that—

Enter SIR PAUL.

Sir P. Come, come! We must strike while the iron is hot! We must take my lady while she is in the humour, since she must necessarily be a party in our deeds. And first I have agreed, as you know, count, that my daughter's portion shall be 80,000*l.* The remainder will chiefly rest with you. What settlement do you intend to make? And on what estates?

Count. None, sir.

Sir P. None!

Count. I have no estates.

Sir P. Sir!—Why, what!—Zounds! After the inquiries I made, I cannot be so deceived! Are not you Count Connolly Villars?

Count. I am, sir.

Sir P. A colonel in the armies of the Most Christian King?

Count. I am, sir.

Sir P. Recommended to me by Messieurs Devigny, the great merchants at Marseilles?

Count. The same, sir.

Sir P. Why, then, what do you mean?

Count. When I first paid my addresses to this lady, I imagined my rank and family were a sufficient counterpoise to wealth.

Sir P. Ha! Gold in one scale, honour in t'other? —Flimsy ware!—No, no—Kick the beam—

Count. But, ardent, violent, and eternal, as my love for your angelic daughter is, and must be, even the loss of her shall not tempt me, any longer, to practise the least imposition.

Sir P. Well, but, 'sblood! The steward! The family estates!

Count. I have told you the truth, sir.

Enter LYDIA.

Lucy. What's the matter, Lydia?

Ly. Poor Mr MacDermot—

Count. What of him?—Any harm?

Ly. He has been in some fray, and is so bruised!

Count. Bruised! Where is he?

Ly. Below, with a packet, which he wants to deliver to Sir Paul.

Sir P. To me?

Ly. Yes, sir. Pray go to him.

Sir P. A packet for me! (*Going.*) I shall never hear the last of this from my lady!

[*Exit* SIR PAUL.

Lucy. Brother, go to my mamma, and endeavour to keep her in temper. (*To the Count.*) Be not dejected! I know my father's affection for me, and do not yet despair. [*Exit after* SIR PAUL.

Count. Charming, generous girl!—This poor MacDermot—

Ly. He is afraid of seeing you. He says you will never pardon him, for having taken the part of some man, whom you threatened to murder!

Count. I? I threatened to murder no man! Will

you, madam, be so kind as to tell him I am here; and that I insist on seeing him?

Ly. With pleasure. [*Exit.*

Count. Kingdoms should not tempt me to pass another day like this!

Enter MACDERMOT, *with his left arm in a sling.*

Count. How now, MacDermot! Where have you been? What's the matter with you?

MacDer. No great matter, my lord—Only a little bit of a joint here. (*Pointing to his arm.*)

Count. (*Alarmed.*) Broken?

MacDer. A double tooth or two—Not much, my lord.

Count. Much!—How?—What have you been doing?

MacDer. (*Pitifully.*) I hope your lordship won't be angry! (*Enraged.*) But the rascals sazed him neck and heels!

Count. Seized who?

MacDer. (*Passionately.*) He was as innocent as the babe unborn, my lord, and he tould 'em so: (*Rage*)—the dirty rapscallions!

Count. Who are you talking of?

MacDer. (*Pitifully.*) To be sure, he—he sent your lordship a—a viry impartinent letter.

Count. How? (*The Count's perplexities and passions are here effectually roused, and increase through the scene.*)

MacDer. There were three of them. Niver did your lordship set your two good-looking eyes on such a pair of thieves!

Count. For Heaven's sake, tell your story straight forward! What letter do you mean? Who?

MacDer. (*With great emotion.*) I hope your lordship will forget and forgive! It would have moved the bowels of your compassion, to have seen the ould gintleman!

Count. Is it possible? What can he mean? What old gentleman?

MacDer. (*Enraged.*) The dirty shaberoons took him by the throat—My viry blood boiled!—Upon my soul, my lord, I could not bear it! I hope you will forgive me! By the merciful father, I could not bear it.

Count. Tell me, this moment, who you mean!

MacDer. He came running back, out of breath, and asked for your lordship. And so, my lord, (*Pleading,*)—being a fillow-crater in distress—

Count. Came where?

MacDer. A couple of as ill-looking Tyburn-turnpike bum-bailiffs as your lordship could wish! With a cowardly complotter at their back! It was he that came behind me with his shillalee, while I was hard at work with them both. But the brave ould gintleman stepped in; and, by the Virgin's night-cap, but he gave him his dose!

Count. Once more, tell me instantly, what old gentleman?

MacDer. Considering his age, he is as active, and as brave a fillow, as ever handled a fist.

Count. (*Aside*) He cannot surely mean my father! MacDermot, I entreat, I command you to tell me of whom you are talking.

MacDer. If your lordship had but seen the noble ould soul, I'm sure you would have forgiven me.

Count. But what letter—

MacDer. Oh! The divle burn the letter! Now, my lord, don't mention it. Pray, don't remimber it, your lordship! Pray don't! By my soul, now, my lord, he is a fine ould fillow.—Oh, how he laid about him!

Count. Was it the person who came this afternoon?

MacDer. My lord—

Count. Fear nothing! Speak.

MacDer. Why, then, my lord—To be sure—it was he himsilf.

Count. And is he safe? Did you free him from them?

MacDer. Why, my lord, I could not hilp it!—(*Emphatically.*) I could not hilp it! By the holy footstool, but I couldn't!

Count. MacDermot! (*Taking him by the hand.*)

MacDer. My lord!

Count. Well, well! A time will come—

MacDer. My lord!

Count. Are you much hurt, MacDermot?—Here—hollo!—

Enter a Footman.

Call a chair! Run for a surgeon and a physician! The best that can be procured.

MacDer. For me, my lord?

Count. For you, my noble fellow!

MacDer. Spare yourself the labour, young man.

Count. Go! Do as I order you; instantly. (*Exit Footman.*) MacDermot, you must be put to bed!

MacDer. To bed, my lord!

Count. And lose some blood.

MacDer. Faith, my lord, that will be a little too much: I've lost quite blood enough already.

Count. Pray! I request! I must have you do as I desire! I would not have any ill happen to you for the world!

MacDer. Oh! And the divle of ill or harm can happen to MacDermot, the while he has such an a ginerous prince-royal of a master. Though I believe, the best thing that could happen to me just now, would be a good supper, and a hearty tiff of whisky-punch.

Count. Not for the Indies!

MacDer. Faith, my lord, it was hard work; and has given me a very craving kind of a call.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. The chair is waiting, sir.

Count. Go, my good fellow! Obey me but this once, and I'll never act the master to you more.

MacDer. Well, well, my lord. But I hope your lordship won't quite kill me with kindness. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR PAUL *and* LUCY.

Sir P. (*With the packet opened.*) So, count, I find, after all your pretended raptures, you never wished to marry my daughter!

Count. Sir!

Sir P. Why did not you retract like a man; and not make a paltry, false excuse of poverty?

Count. Sir, I made no false excuse.

Sir P. How, sir! Shall I not believe my eyes? Have I not bills here in my hand, drawn in your favour, for five hundred thousand crowns?

Count. In mine!

Sir P. In yours. Given me this moment by your own servant.

Count. Impossible, sir!

Sir P. Impossible, is it? Why, look you, here are the bills: and, hollo!

Enter Footman.

Go you, sir, and desire Mr MacDermot to come back.

Count. Stir not for your life, on such an errand! He must not, shall not be disturbed.

Sir P. Nay, my word, it seems, is not to be believed; nor perhaps the bills themselves! But, sir, though you vaunt so highly of being a man of honour, the trick was beneath a man of honesty.

Enter LADY PECKHAM *and* EDMUND.

L. Peck. Here's a komakul kind of an obstrope-

rous person, that says he must speak to the count—You may come in, mister.

Enter MR DORIMONT *and* LYDIA.

Sir P. Ah! What, my friend the steward! I am glad you are come! Never was so amazed in my life! Your master, here, has been telling me he has no estates!

L. Peck. How!

Mr Dor. My master, sir!

Count. The feelings of man cannot support this open shame! (*Crossing to go.*)

Mr Dor. Whither now, sir?

Sir P. Ay! Talk to him! I'm in a mist!

Count. Suffer me to pass, sir. (*Crosses to the door.*) Speak the truth—Render me contemptible! Abhorrent! But make me not a witness of my own disgrace!

Mr Dor. Stay, sir!

Count. I cannot.

Mr Dor. Stay! or dread a father's malediction!

Sir P. His father! The plague! Hem!—Lydia!

Ly. Hush!

L. Peck. Father, indeed! What, he! So, so! Here's a wirago! Here's a chouse!

Sir P. My lady—

L. Peck. I thought what vould be the upshot on't!

Edm. Madam—(*Takes her aside for a moment in dumb shew.*)

Mr Dor. Spurred on by suppositions and conceits the most absurd, wholly intent upon yourself, contemning others, exacting respect you did not merit, refusing ceremony where 'twas due, protuberant with pride, yet poorly carping at and holding idiot warfare with the pride of others, forgetful of the dignity of reason, but with tenacious grasp clinging to the ludicrous dignity of birth, the heir indeed and first-born of Folly, Ignorance itself has mocked and taunted at you!

L. Peck. Wery troo. Give him his own.

Sir P. Zounds! My lady, I wish he would give you your own a little. Not but it's right enough.

L. Peck. To be sure; I knows wery vell I am right.

Mr Dor. Your father too has been avoided, nay, disowned. Your father, who for years has lived in indigence, that he might secretly supply your wants, support you in splendour, and preserve you from all the misery of which he made himself the willing victim.

Count. Sir! You?—Was it you? Oh! ingratitude!

Mr Dor. Your father was offensive to your sight. And what was it you despised? Why, this poor garb. You wished no kindred with virtuous poverty. Had I appeared in all my former state, though knave or fool had been blazoned on my brow, yet, decked in the trappings of magnificence, I had received an open welcome. But, blest be my penury, since it has been your punishment.

Count. Sir, wrung as my heart is by remorse, and guilty as I know myself, for I have still increase of guilt, no words can mitigate my crimes. Yet, though I have erred, I feel I have something in me capable of good; and strong propensities to all the tender ties, the filial duties, and the severer virtues which I have seemed to want; a mind which, once convinced, has strength to shun and to subdue its master passion, renounce its folly, and abhor its turpitude. Deep is my offence against you and nature; but let nature plead in my behalf. Here, at your feet, repentant for my faults, I claim that pity which a father so good and so affectionate will not sure refuse.

Mr Dor. Oh, no; for now you speak like the son of my heart, the image of my brightest hopes. You have stood the fiery trial, and are pure.

L. Peck. Vhy, but hark you me, mister. Vhy, vhat—you are not a count too, to be sure?

Mr Dor. No, madam.

L. Peck. Vhy then——

Mr Dor. If a title can flatter your ladyship, mine is something higher.

L. Peck. How!

Mr Dor. I am a marquis.

L. Peck. A marquis!—You!—Vell! (*Aside.*) For an outlandish marquis!

Edm. My lady——

Sir P. Well, but the bills? (*Holding them out in his hand.*)

Mr Dor. They are mine.

Count. Yours, sir!

Mr Dor. Remittances for some recovered arrears. But where is my brave protector, my hero?

Count. Safe, sir.—Every care is taken of the generous fellow. Is the physician come?

Sir P. Yes, yes. I have taken care of that. I have sent him my own physician. Hem! (*Aside.*) My cook.

Count. You know not half his worth.

Mr Dor. Which shall not go unrewarded.

Count. No, by Heaven.

Mr Dor. We have now the means; we no longer are oppressed and poor.

Count. Yet are you not in present danger?

Mr Dor. No: malice has spent its last effort. Our ambassador has just sent me the final decision of the judges: my sentence is reversed, my whole estates are restored, and the power of my persecutors is at an end.

Count. Oh Fortune! Oh my father! And may I hope it? My Lucy! may I?

Lucy. Yes; hope every thing.

Count. Mine!

Lucy. Yours—heart and soul.

Sir P. She is a brave wench.

L. Peck. Hold a blow, if you please.—What! Am I nobody?

Count. Madam, to you a thousand excuses are due.

L. Peck. To be sure they are.

Count. I am conscious of my past ridicule, and will no more contend with your ladyship, for prejudices so false and weak.

L. Peck. I knoo I vus right. I knoo you made yourself ridicolous. I told you so often enough.

Sir P. Well said, my lady. But hark you, Miss Lydia—(*Significantly.*) And, sir——

Mr Dor. A moment's patience, sir.—Count! How shall I tell him? My son, look at this charming, this virtuous young lady.

Sir P. (*Aside.*) Zounds! what now?

Count. I am conscious of having treated her with proud unkindness, at the very moment too when I perceived she was sincerely my friend.

Mr Dor. Your friend! Look at her! Does not your heart throb? Feel you not sensations more tender? Are you not all doubt, all hope, all fear, all perturbation?

Count. Sir! What?—Who?

Mr Dor. Can you not imagine? Look at her, I say!—Behold her agitation!

Count. Mercy!

Mr Dor. Open your arms, your heart, to receive her——

Count. Sir! Madam! Who?

Mr Dor. Your sister!

Count. My sister!

Ly. My dearest, best of brothers! (*Running into his arms.*)

Lucy. My friend!—my Lydia!

Count. Oh! how culpable have I been!

Sir P. (*Aside.*) 'Sblood! Here's a pretty piece of business!

L. Peck. What's that you say, sir? Miss Liddy the count's sister!

Edm. 'Tis very true, madam.

L. Peck. Troo! Vell, I purtest I'm quite in a quandary!

Mr Dor. (*To* SIR PAUL.) And now, sir——

Sir P. (*Aside.*) Yes, 'tis my turn now!—Yes, sir.

Mr Dor. While labouring to reclaim the follies of youth——

Sir P. Yes, sir.

Mr Dor. We ought not to forget the vices of age.

Sir P. Hem! We'll talk of them after supper, sir. (*Looking round at* LADY PECKHAM *and the Company.*)

Mr Dor. Well, sir, on condition——

Sir P. Oh, any condition you please, sir.

Edm. (*Leading* LYDIA.) My dear father!——

Sir P. My kind son!—(*Aside.*)—Sly rascal!

Ly. (*To* SIR PAUL.) We shall want a house, sir.

Sir P. Hem! Ay, ay!

Ly. Somewhere in Mary-le-bone.

Sir P. Very well.

Ly. With a——

Sir P. Zounds! (*Aside to* LYDIA.) Hush! Don't mention the back door.

Ly. Then we are all friends?

Sir P. To be sure.—But, you may as well not tell Scapegrace!

Ly. Never fear.

Sir P. Not a word of the new liveries!

Ly. Depend upon my honour.

Count. My sister and my friend! Can it be?

Edm. Would you not wish it thus?

Count. Oh! most ardently!

Mr Dor. Chequered are the scenes of life. Pleasure and pain, joy and grief, austerity and laughter, intermingling, weave a motley web. Our prejudices are our punishments: they cling about us, warp our

actions, distort our manners, render us the food of satire, the mockery of fools, and torture us as wailing urchins are tormented to make sport for boys. Error and folly impede the progress of perfection. Truth alone can make men wise and happy. Myself the sacrifice of falsehood and mistake, feebly have I striven to stem the torrent: and here my task, and here I hope my troubles end. [*Exeunt omnes.*

HE'S MUCH TO BLAME;

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

LORD VIBRATE,	*Mr Quick.*
SIR GEORGE VERSATILE,	*Mr Lewis.*
MR DELAVAL,	*Mr Pope.*
DR GOSTERMAN,	*Mr Murray.*
THOMPSON,	*Mr Davenport.*
WILLIAMS,	*Mr Clarke.*
HARRY,	*Mr Abbot.*
MASTER OF THE HOTEL,	*Mr Thompson.*
JENKINS,	*Mr Rees.*
WAITER,	*Mr Blurton.*
FOOTMAN,	*Mr Curtis.*
LADY VIBRATE,	*Mrs Mattocks.*
LADY JANE,	*Miss Betterton.*
MARIA,	*Mrs Pope.*
LUCY,	*Mrs Gibbs.*
LADY JANE'S WOMAN,	*Mrs Norton.*

HE'S MUCH TO BLAME.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

Ringing heard.—The Hall of a Hotel, with a spacious Staircase.

Enter the Master and Head Waiter, meeting.

Ma. Why, where are all the fellows, Jenkins? Don't you hear the bell No. 9?

Jen. Tom is gone up to answer it, sir.

Ma. Who occupies that apartment?

Jen. The handsome youth and girl that arrived late last night.

Ma. Just as I was going to bed?

Jen. Yes, sir.

Ma. He is quite a boy.

Jen. Razor has never robbed him of a hair.

Ma. Some stripling, perhaps, that has run away with his mother's maid.

Jen. They ordered separate beds.

Ma. Well, see what they want.

Jen. Yes, sir.

Ma. And, hark ye, be attentive the moment you hear Lord and Lady Vibrate, or their daughter, stirring. People of quality must never be neglected.

Jen. Oh no, sir. Here is Dr Gosterman. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter the Doctor.

Ma. Good morrow, Doctor.

Doc. Coot morgen, my tear friend. Is de Fiprate family fisible to see?

Ma. Not yet.

Doc. My lordtship und my latyship vas sharge me to be mit dem betime.

Ma. You are a great favourite there, Doctor.

Doc. Ya, sair. Dat I am efery vhere.

Ma. You act in a double capacity: physician and privy-counsellor.

Doc. Und I am as better in de von as in de oder.

Ma. Why, ay, Doctor, you have a smooth pleasant manner.

Doc. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I mix de syrup mit all my prescription.

Ma. Ay, ay, you are a useful person.

Doc. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I leave Yarmany, und I com at Englandt mit little money und great cunning in de art, und de science. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. So

I make de nation benefit, und myself rish. Dat is my vay.

Ma. Yes; you can tickle the guineas into your pocket.

Doc. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay.

Ma. You have had many patients?

Doc. Ya, sair. I af cure tousand und tousand! Dat is my vay.

Ma. And how many have you killed, Doctor?

Doc. Der Teufel, sair! Kill? Ven my patient vas die, dat vas Nature dat vas kill. Ven dey vas cure, dat vas Dr Von Gostermans. Dat is my vay. No, sair! Dr Von Gostermans vas kill himself, dat oder people may live.

Ma. How do you mean kill yourself, Doctor?

Doc. Der Teufel, sair! Vas I not be call here? Vas I not be call dere? Vas I not be call fery vhere? I af hundert und tousand patient dat die fery day till I vas com. So I vas drive to de city; und dere I vas meet my besten friend, de gout, de apoplexy, und de asthmatica: und den I vas drive to de inn of court, und de lawyer; und dere I vas find more of my besten friend, de hydropica, de rheumatica, und de paralytica.

Ma. What, Doctor! The lawyers and inns of court paralytic?

Doc. Ya, sair.

Ma. I wish they were, with all my soul!

Doc. Und den I vas drive und make my reverence mit de lordt, und mit de duke, und mit de grandee; und dere I vas meet mosh oder of my besten friend; de hypochondrica, de spasmodica, de hysterica, de marasma, de morbid affection, de tremor, und de mist before de eye.

Ma. Morbid affections, tremors, and mists before the eyes, the diseases of the great?

Doc. Ya, sair. Und dey vas grow vorse und vorse fery day.

Ma. Well, well, they have chosen a skilful doctor!

Doc. Ya, sair. I shall do all deir business, efery von. Dat is my vay. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. Dat is my vay. Bote dat is as noting at all. Ah sa, my liebste: you vas my besten friend. You make me acquaint myself mit all de patient dat vas come to your house; und so I vas your besten friend, und I vas gif de physic for yourself, und de physic for your shile, und de physic for your vife.

Ma. For which my wife will never more thank you, Doctor.

Doc. No; your vife vas die, und you vas tank me yourself. So now you tell me: Af you any new customer dat vas com?

Ma. Yes; a youth, and a girl that looks like a waiting-maid, arrived late last night.

Doc. Vhich it vas a person of grandeur?

Ma. Oh no; wholly unattended.

Doc. Ah, ah! Vhich it vas a lofing couple, den?

Ma. It seems not.

Doc. A poy und a vaiting-vomans! Dere shall be someting mystery in dat.

Ma. So I think. Here comes the girl.

Doc. Ah, ah! Let me do: I shall talk to her. I shall begin by make acquaintance mit her.

SCENE III.

Enter LUCY *down the staircase.*

Lucy. Pray, sir, desire the waiter to make haste with breakfast.

Ma. Here, Jenkins! Breakfast to No. 9. Be quick!

Jen. (*Without.*) Yes, sir.

Ma. Tea or coffee, madam?

Lucy. Tea.

Doc. How you do, my tear? You vas pretty young frau: fery pretty girl, my tear. Perhaps you vas stranger, my tear?

Lucy. Perhaps I am.

Doc. Ah! Vhat is your name, my tear?

Lucy. That which my godmother gave me.

Doc. Your mastair af made de long journey, my tear.

Lucy. Has he?

Doc. From vat country you com, my tear?

Lucy. Hem!

Doc. I ask, from vat country you com, my tear.

Lucy. Ask again.

Doc. From de town of——Ha!

Lucy. Ay. How do you call it?

Doc. Dat is vat I vant you shall tell?

Lucy. I see you do.

Doc. Your mastair is fery young, my tear.

Lucy. Thank you, sir.

Doc. For vat you tank me?

Lucy. For your news.

Doc. Ah, ah! You are fery vitty und pretty, my tear.

Lucy. More news. Thank you again.

Doc. Vat vas you call de young yentleman's name?

Lucy. I will ask, and send you word.

Doc. How long shall he be stay in town?

Lucy. Till he goes into the country.

Doc. Vat is your capacity, my tear?

Lucy. Like yours, little enough.

Doc. You not understandt me, my tear. Vat is your post, your office?

Lucy. To answer rude questions.

Doc. Your mastair is man of family?

Lucy. Yes. He had a father, and mother, and uncles, and aunts.

Doc. Und tey vas tead?

Lucy. I am not a tomb-stone.

Doc. Com, com, my tear, let you make me answer.

Lucy. Anan?

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Here is the breakfast, madam.

Lucy. Take it up stairs.

[*Exeunt* Lucy *and Waiter up the staircase.*

Doc. Der Teufel! A cunning yipsey! She has make me raise my curiosity. (*Calls.*) My tear! My tear! Com pack, my tear! (Lucy *returns.*) Do my compliment to your mastair, und I shall make me mosh happy if I shall af de honeur to make me acquaintance mit him. My name is call Dr Von Gostermans. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest docteur dat vas possible. My lordt und my lady Fiprate vas my besten friend. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans vas know efery poty; und efery poty vas know Docteur Von Gostermans. You tell him dat, my tear.

Lucy. Tell him that? I cannot remember half of it! Are you, sir, acquainted with Lord Vibrate's family?

Doc. Ya, my tear. I vas make friendship mit dem more as many year.

Lucy. And do you know where they are?

Ma. To be sure he does. They are in this—

Doc. (*Aside to Master.*) Hush! Silence your tongue! Dere is someting mystery. (*Aloud.*) If you

shall make me introduce to your mastair, my tear, I shall tell him efery ting und more as dat, my tear. Vill you, my tear?

Lucy. I will go and inquire.

Doc. Tank you, my tear. You are fery pretty girl, my tear: fery vitty pretty—Ah! You are so sly cunning little yipsey, my tear. Ah, ah! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Chamber. MARIA *in man's clothes with a letter in her hand and walking with anxiety. The Waiter enters and leaves the breakfast. She then reads.*

Mar. "Dear sister, the letter I now write is almost needless, for I shall leave Italy and follow it immediately; having at last obtained intelligence of your faithless lover. I am sorry to inform you that, in addition to your unpardonable wrongs, I have my own to vindicate. But I have threatened too long. You have heard of the Earl of Vibrate. He and his family are by this arrived in England; your betrayer accompanies them, and I am in close pursuit.

PAUL DELAVAL."

In what will this end? Must they meet? Must they fight? Must one or both of them fall? Oh horror! Shall I be the cause of murder? And whose blood is to be spilled? That of the most generous of brothers, or of the man on whom my first and last affections have been fixed! Is there no safety; no means?

SCENE V.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Why, look here now, madam, you are letting the breakfast grow cold! You have been reading that letter again. I do believe I shall never get you to eat any more. Come now, pray do take some of this French roll; and I'll pour out the tea. Do! Pray do! Pray do!

Mar. I cannot eat, Lucy: I am eaten. Terror and despair are devouring me.

Lucy. Dear! Dear! What will all this come to? Did not you promise me that, as soon as you had got safe to London in your disguise, you would be better?

Mar. Can it be? My kind, my gentle, my true-hearted George!

Lucy. True-hearted! No, no, madam, he was never true-hearted: or he could not so soon have changed, because his ill fortune changed to good. Every body knows true love never changes.

Mar. What have I done? How have I offended? His caresses, his protestations, his tender endearments! Is then the man in whom my soul was wrapt a vil—Oh!

Lucy. I declare, madam, if you take on this way, you will break my heart as well as your own. Beside, you forget all the while what you put on this dress and came up to London for.

Mar. Oh no. It was if possible to prevent mischief! Murder!——They have never met. They do not know each other. But how shall I discover Sir George? Of whom shall I inquire?

Lucy. If you would but eat your breakfast, I do think I could put you in the way.

Mar. You?

Lucy. Yes.

Mar. By what means?

Lucy. Will you eat your breakfast, then?

Mar. I cannot eat. Speak.

Lucy. Why, I have just been talking to an outlandish comical doctor, that says he is acquainted with Lord Vibrate.

Mar. Indeed! Where is this doctor?

Lucy. He is waiting without; for I knew you would wish to speak to him.

Mar. Shew him in immediately.

Lucy. I'll tell him you are not well, which is but too true; though you must remember, madam, you are a man. So dry your eyes, forget your misfortunes, and, there, cock your hat, a that fashion, and try to swagger a little, or you will be found out. You stand so like a statue, and look so pitiful! Lord, that's not the way! If you are timorsome, and silent, and bashful, nobody on earth will take you for a youth of fortune and fashion. [*Exit.*

Mar. (*In revery.*) If they should meet! Heavens! they must not.

SCENE VI.

Re-enter LUCY *and Doctor.*

Lucy. My master is not very well; he eats neither breakfast, dinner, nor supper, and gets no sleep.

Doc. He noder eat, noder drink, noder sleep! Dat is pad! Fery pad! But dat is as noting at all, my

tear. Let me do. You shall see presently py and py vat is my vay.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Doc. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. My name is call Dr Von Gostermans. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest docteur dat vas possible. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans is know efery pody; und efery pody is know Dr Von Gostermans. De pretty coquine yung frau tell me dat you not fery fell. You not eat, you not drink, you not sleep. Dat is pad! Fery pad! Bote dat is as noting at all. You tell me de diagnostic und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail; und I shall make you prescripe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsamic, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif; vhich is efery ting so shveet und so delectable as all vat is possible.

Mar. Your pardon, sir, but I wish to see you on business of another nature.

Doc. Ah ah! Someting of de prifate affair! Dat is coot. I shall be as petter for dat as for de oder. I vas know de vorl. I vas know efery pody, und efery pody vas know me. Dat is my vay.

Mar. Perhaps then you happen to know Sir George Versatile?

Doc. Oh, Der Teufel, sair! Ya, ya. Sair Shorge is my besten friend. Vhich it vas six month dat he vas succeed to his title und estate; und den I vas make acquaintance mit him: dat is my vay.

Mar. But he has been abroad since.

Doc. Ya, sair. Ven he vas poor, he vas fall in lofe mit fery pretty yung frau. Bote so soon as he vas pecome rish paronet, dat vas anoder ting. So his relation und his friend vas sent him to make de gran tour.

Mar. And he was easily persuaded.

Doc. Ya, sair. He vas vat you call fery coot nature: he vas alvay comply.

Mar. Compliance with him is more than a weakness. I fear it is a vice.

Doc. So he vas make acquaintance mit Lordt und mit Laty Fiprate; und den he vas tink no more of de pretty yung frau, pecause he vas fall in lofe mit anoder.

Mar. Sir! Another! What other?

Doc. Vat you shall ail, sair? You shange coleur.

Mar. With whom has he fallen in love?

Doc. Mit de taughter of Lordt Fiprate.

Mar. With Lady Jane?

Doc. Ya, sair; mit Laty Shane—My Cot, sair! vat you shall ail? You not make fall in lofe yourself mit Laty Shane?

Mar. No, no—they are no doubt to be married.

Doc. My Cot, sair! you so pale as deaths—My Cot, you shall faint!

Lucy. Faint, indeed! (*Aside.*) Bear up, madam. (*Aloud.*) My master is too much of a man to faint. (*Aside.*) I'll run for a glass of water. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

Mar. The charming Lady Jane! Where is she?

Doc. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate und my Laty Shane vas all in de house here.

Mar. In this house?

Doc. Ya, sair!

Mar. And is Sir George here too?

Doc. He is com und go alvay sometime efery tay.

Mar. Are they to be married?

Doc. My Cot, sair! you af de ague fit.

Mar. Are they to be married?

Doc. My Laty Fiprate vas mosh incli[illegible]

Shorge, und my lordt vas sometime mosh incline too; und den he vas sometime not mosh incline; und den he vas doubt; und den he vas do me de honeur to consultate mit me.

Mar. And what is your advice?

Doc. My Lordt Fiprate vas my besten friends, und I vas adfice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und Sair Shorge vas my besten friends too, und I vas adfice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und my Laty Fiprate vas petter as my besten friends, und den I vas more adfice dat she shall do all as vat she please.

Mar. But Lady Jane had another lover?

Doc. Ya, sair. Mr Delafal vas make lofe mit her. He vas com from de East Indie, und he vas lofe her fery mosh; und she vas go mit de family to Italy, und my Laty Fiprate vas make acquaintance mit Sair Shorge, pecause he vas so mosh pleasant und coot humeur, und he say all as vat she say: vhich vas de vay to alvay make agréable.

Mar. Could you do me the favour to introduce me to Lady Jane?

Doc. Ya, sair. I shall do all as vat shall make agréable. Dat is my vay.

SCENE VIII.

Re-enter LUCY *hastily.*

Lucy. (*Aside to her mistress.*) Oh, madam, don't be terrified, but I declare I have spilled almost all the [redacted]ater!

Mar. (*Alarmed.*) What is the matter?

Lucy. He is come!

Mar. Who? Sir George?

Lucy. No: don't be frightened: Mr Delaval, from abroad.

Mar. My brother! Heavens! Did he see you?

Lucy. No. I had a glimpse of him, and whisked away just as he stepped out of the post-chaise.

Mar. Should he meet me in this disguise, what will he say?

Lucy. Send away the doctor, and let us lock ourselves up.

Mar. (*To the Doctor.*) I must beg you will excuse me, sir, but it is necessary at present I should be alone. With your permission, I will see you again in the afternoon, and, in the mean time——(*Gives money.*)

Doc. Oh, sair! I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I shall make you mosh more fisit, and den you shall tell me de diagnostic und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail.

Lucy. Yes, yes, another time.

Doc. Und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command.

Lucy. You have told us all that before.

Doc. Und I shall make you preseripe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsamic, oder de soporific, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif, vhich is efery ting so shveet und delectable as all vat is possible.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) Was ever any thing so provoking? —Pray, sir, make haste.

Doc. You shall make remembrance of Dr Von Gostermans. I am practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. (*The Doctor goes off talking, and* LUCY *locks the door while the scene changes.*)

SCENE IX.

The Hall of the Hotel.

DELAVAL, WILLIAMS, *Master, and* JENKIN.

Del. Is the portmanteau safe?
Wil. Yes, sir.
Del. And the trunks?
Wil. All right.
Del. Have you paid the postillions?
Wil. Yes, sir.
Ma. (*To* DELAVAL.) This way if you please, sir. Jenkins!
Jen. Coming, sir.
Ma. Shew the damask room. What will you please to have for breakfast, sir?
Del. Nothing.
Ma. Sir!
Del. Any thing.
Ma. Bring tea, coffee, and new-laid eggs.
Jen. In a minute, sir.
Del. (*To* WIL.) Observe the directions I gave you. Inquire immediately, and find if the Vibrate family be in town.
Wil. I will be careful, sir.—Hay?—(*To* DEL. *going.*)—Sir! Sir!
Del. Well?
Wil. Look! Here comes Lord Vibrate's secretary!

SCENE X.

Enter THOMPSON.

Del. (*To* THOMPSON.) Mr Thompson!

Thom. Ah! Mr Delaval? I am heartily glad to see you in England!

Del. Thank you, my good friend. But how is this? Where is the family? Where is Lady Jane?

Thom. I thought that would be your question! They are all in this house.

Del. Indeed!

Thom. I knew, when Lady Jane left Italy, your stay there would be short.

Del. Ay, ay! The follies and frenzies of the madman are visible to all eyes, except his own.

Thom. I see you are dissatisfied.

Del. Tortured, till my thoughts and temper are so changed, that I am almost as odious to myself as the world is become hateful to me.

Thom. I own, you have some cause.

Del. Would *my* injuries were all! But there are other and still deeper stabs. It is not yet ten months since I returned from India; my heart how light, my eye how cheerful, and my hand prompt at any commendable act. I could then be moved to joy and sorrow, and every sympathising passion. Smiles and mock courtesy passed current on me, the word of man and woman was taken on trust, and I lived in the sunshine of an open unsuspecting soul. But I am now otherwise taught. I am changed. My better part is brutalized; and the wrongs that lie rankling here have stripped me of human affections, and made me almost savage.

Thom. What can be said? Patience is the—

Del. Talk not of patience: I must act. I may then perhaps inquire whether I have acted rightly. But I must first see Lady Jane and Lord Vibrate.

Thom. Shall I inform his lordship of your arrival?

Del. By no means. Having injured, he may wish not to see me; and I would not afford him time to invent excuses, and avoid giving me a hearing. Though my wrongs must be endured, they shall yet be told.

Thom. I own, they are great.

Del. Those that you know are heavy; yet, severe as the struggle would be, 'tis possible they might be hushed to rest; but there are others which blood only can obliterate, which can only sleep in death! Such is the road I must travel. Not long since nature was jocund, the azure heavens were bright, and pleasure was in every path; but now darkness, fathomless gulphs, guilty terrors, and all the dreadful phantoms of meditated desolation, lie before me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

LORD VIBRATE *at a Table with a Quarto Volume reading.*

L. Vib. The ancient sceptics doubted of every thing, affirmed nothing, and kept the judgment al-

ways in suspense. All things, said they, are equally indifferent, uncertain, and indeterminate. The mind is never to assent to any thing, that it may never be astonished or disturbed, but enjoy a perfect calm. (*Rises with important wisdom in his looks.*) Such were the maxims of Pyrrho and his disciples, those renowned sages of antiquity! Well! And such too have been my maxims practically. All my life have I been wavering, uncertain, and indeterminate! A sagacious sceptic without knowing it, and as it were by instinct! It was but lately I discovered what a wise man I am! And yet it seems to me as if I were scarcely half wise enough, for I am told that I am to doubt of every thing which I find rather difficult. For example: that my wife, Lady Vibrate, is an extravagant rackety rantipole woman of fashion, can I doubt that? No. That she squanders my money, disturbs my peace, and contradicts for contradiction's sake, can I doubt that? No. Then have I not a daughter to marry, a law-suit to begin, and a thousand perplexing affairs, so that I do not know which way to turn? Why, all this appears true to me; but the sceptics teach that appearances deceive, and that nothing is certain. I may be Lord Vibrate, or I may be the Grand Turk. These doctrines are prodigiously deep. (*Considers.*) But I must think of something else just now. I have a thousand things to do, and know as little where to begin as where they will end. Ay! All is uncertainty! (*Rings.*) Harry! Edward!

SCENE II.

Enter JENKINS.

Jen. Did your lordship call?

L. Vib. Where are my servants? I want some of my plagues.

Jen. They are ready at hand, my lord. Here is your lordship's secretary.

SCENE III.

Enter MR THOMPSON, *and exit* JENKINS.

L. Vib. What is the reason, Mr Thompson, that nobody waits? Here am I, fretting myself to a mummy for the good of my family, while every body about me is as drowsy as the court of common council after dinner! Have they taken laudanum? Are they in a lethargy? Are they all dead?

Thom. If they were, your lordship would have the goodness to raise them.

L. Vib. Don't you know how many people I have to see, and places I have to go to?

Thom. No, my lord.

L. Vib. Why, did not I tell you?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord Vib. Then how can you say you don't know?

Thom. Because I venture to presume, my lord, you do not know yourself.

L. Vib. I am distracted with doubts. Harry!

SCENE IV.

Enter Footman.

Har. Did your lordship call?

L. Vib. Where are you all? What are you about?

I think you have lived long enough with me to know my way.

Har. Yes, my lord: we know it very well.

L. Vib. If you are not more attentive, I'll discharge you every one.

Har. Oh no; (*Half aside;*) you will not do that.

L. Vib. What are you muttering, sirrah?

Har. Only, my lord, that we know your way.

L. Vib. Order the coach at eleven.

Har. Yes, my lord.

L. Vib. No; order it at one.

Har. Yes, my lord.

L. Vib. Come back. Order it in ten minutes; and remember I am not at home. Come back. Don't order it at all.

Har. Must visitors be admitted?

L. Vib. Yes—no—I cannot tell—I will consider. Be within call. Thompson! [*Exit Footman.*

Thom. My lord.

L. Vib. Step to that picture-dealer. I will have the Guido. Yet—'tis a great sum. No—It is a master-piece; I must have it. Why don't you go?

Thom. The picture is sold, my lord.

L. Vib. Sold!—gone! Have I lost it? This is always the way! I am for ever disappointed. Harry!

Re-enter Footman.

Har. My lord.

L. Vib. Did you go with the message to the stable-keeper, last night?

Har. Yes, my lord.

L. Vib. Let me know when he comes.

Har. He will come no more, my lord.

L. Vib. Come no more!

Har. No, my lord.

L. Vib. Why so?

Har. He says you never know your own mind, my lord.

L. Vib. Insolent fellow!

Har. Dr Gosterman is below.

L. Vib. Admit him. Stay; I cannot see him yet. In half an hour—in ten minutes—by and by.

[*Exit Footman.*

SCENE V.

L. Vib. I must not waste any time in these trifles. I must attend to this law business. I wish I could determine. What am I to do, Thompson?

Thom. In what, my lord?

L. Vib. The affair of the ejectment. If I once embroil myself in law, there will be no end; and if I do not, the consequences are still worse.

Thom. Then they are bad indeed, my lord.

L. Vib. 'Tis strange that I can come to no resolution on this subject.

Thom. (*Aside.*) Nor on any other.

L. Vib. I must decide this very day, or the time will be elapsed.

Thom. A lawyer, I should suppose, my lord, would give you the best advice.

L. Vib. How! Are you mad, Thompson? A lawyer give good advice!

Thom. The present possessor has held the estate twenty years.

L. Vib. Not till to-morrow. I have time still to make my claim. How shall I act? Shall I never leave this hotel?——Has the builder been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

L. Vib. I can get nothing done. My whole life long I have been distracted with the multiplicity of my affairs.

Thom. And so am I afraid, my lord, you always will be.

L. Vib. Why so, sir?

Thom. Because your lordship undertakes so much, and does so little.

L. Vib. So he has not been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

L. Vib. Nor the lawyers?

Thom. No, my lord.

L. Vib. Nor my steward?

Thom. No, my lord.

L. Vib. Nor Sir George?

Thom. No, my lord.

L. Vib. Where is Lady Vibrate? Where is Lady Jane? Are they all in their graves? Have none of them shewn signs of life yet?

Thom. Not one. Your lordship is the only person in the family who begin your miseries so soon in a morning.

L. Vib. The crosses and cares that prey upon me are enough to make any man on earth miserable.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord, but if you would care less, both yourself and your servants would sleep the more. My lady cares for nothing; and she can sleep when she is in bed, and sing, and dance, and laugh at your lordship's cares and fears when she is up.

L. Vib. She will drive me mad!

Thom. (*Going.*) Ah, here she is, as it were for the purpose.

L. Vib. Tell Harry to admit the doctor. No—not just yet—yes—in five minutes—I don't know when. [*Exit* THOMPSON.

SCENE VI.

Enter LADY VIBRATE.

Lady Vib. Upon my honour, my lord, you are the

most insupportable person imaginable. You vociferate worse than the man who calls when my carriage stops the way. Is any body dying? Is the house on fire? Is the world at an end?

L. Vib. By the life your ladyship leads, I should suppose it is pretty near.

Lady Vib. You always give me such shocking head-aches of a morning.

L. Vib. You always give me such shocking heart-aches of an evening.

Lady Vib. Did not I send to you last night, to request your lordship would not disturb me?

L. Vib. It has been your ladyship's amusement to disturb me all your life.

Lady Vib. Your lordship knows I love amusement.

L. Vib. I have not slept a wink since.

Lady Vib. You had slept quite enough before. Pray how long are we to remain in this hotel? Your lordship should remember it is degrading for a man of rank to doze away life in the style of a colonel reduced to half-pay.

L. Vib. Your ladyship should remember, it is degrading for a woman of rank to riot away life, and reduce her creditors to live without pay.

Lady Vib. Pshaw! that is the old story.

L. Vib. But it is a very true story. It is a great misfortune that persons so opposite should pair.

Lady Vib. A terrible one indeed. I am all gaiety and good humour: you are all turmoil and lamentation. I sing, laugh, and welcome pleasure wherever I find it: you take your lantern to look for misery, which the sun itself cannot discover.

L. Vib. I am overwhelmed by crosses and vexations; and you participate in none of them.

Lady Vib. No; Heaven be praised!

L. Vib. Will you attend to me, my lady, for half an hour?

Lady Vib. Mercy! attend to you for half an hour! You, my lord, may think proper to be as miserable as Job: but I am not Job's wife.

L. Vib. I insist, Lady Vibrate, on a serious answer. How ought I to act? What should I do, in this law affair?

Lady Vib. I cannot tell what you ought to do; but I know what you will do.

L. Vib. Do you?—What?

Lady Vib. Nothing.

L. Vib. The recovery of this property would enable me to give my daughter a portion suitable to her rank. If it is lost, she will be almost destitute of fortune.

Lady Vib. You should have thought of that before, my lord.

L. Vib. Before!—Why, I have thought of nothing else for years.—I have asked every body's advice.

Lady Vib. And followed nobody's.

L. Vib. It shall be so. The ejectment shall be served: proceedings shall commence.

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Vib. I say they shall.—I am determined.

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! I know you, my lord.

L. Vib. You know! I say they shall, if it be only to prove that you know nothing of the matter.

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! A pleasant motive: but even that will not be strong enough.

L. Vib. But it will, my lady.

Lady Vib. But it won't, my lord.

SCENE VII.

Enter Doctor.

L. Vib. I say it will, my lady.

Lady Vib. I say it won't, my lord.

Doc. Coot morgen, to my coot lordt und my coot laty.

L. Vib. For Heaven's sake, doctor, stop my lady's tongue.

Lady Vib. For Heaven's sake, doctor, give my lord a quieting draught.

Doc. I shall do efery ting as vat you desire, my coot lordt und my coot laty.

L. Vib. Can nothing silence you, Lady Vibrate? Shall I never have a quiet hearing? I want to talk with you and the doctor on a thousand things.

Lady Vib. Yes; you wish to have all the talk to yourself.

L. Vib. On the marriage of our daughter.

Lady Vib. Oh, with all my heart. A marriage at least begins with music, feasting, and dancing. So say on.

L. Vib. I am not yet determined in favour of Sir George.

Lady Vib. But I am.—(*While they speak, the Doctor gesticulates in favour of each.*)

L. Vib. Mr Delaval is an unobjectionable gentleman; and he was the first suitor.

Lady Vib. Sir George can sing; Sir George can dance; Sir George has air, grace, fashion, and fortune.

L. Vib. Pshaw!—His best qualities are prudence, and attention to his own concerns. Ask the doctor.

Doc. He has fery mosh prudence, my coot lordt.

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! I vow Sir George is the most airy, thoughtless, pleasant person living; except myself.

Doc. Ya; Sair Shorge is fery mosh pleasant; und my latyship is fery mosh more pleasant.

L. Vib. Absurd!—His humour is calm, cold, and serious.

Doc. Fery serious, inteet.

Lady Vib. Whimsical, animated, delightful.

Doc. Fery animate, fery telightful, upon my vordt.

L. Vib. I never met a more discreet, sensible man in my life.

Lady Vib. True; for he thinks of nothing but his pleasures.

L. Vib. His affairs, you mean.

Lady Vib. I tell you, my lord, he is exactly what I wish: the very soul of levity, whim, and laughter.

L. Vib. I tell you, my lady, he is exactly like myself: prudent, and full of sage hesitation. He considers before he acts. Does he not, doctor?

Doc. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady Vib. He never considers at all. Does he, doctor?

Doc. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

L. Vib. How so? We cannot both be right.

Doc. You shall please to make me parton, my coot lordt. Sair Shorge vas all as vat you say, und all as vat my coot laty say. Mit my laty, he vas merry; mit my lordt, he vas sad. Mit my laty, he vas laugh, und vas sing, und vas tance; und he vas make melancholy, und misery, und vas do all dat shall make agréable mit my lordt.

L. Vib. Is he so variable?

Doc. Ya, he vas fery mosh comply; fery mosh coot humeur. He vas alvay make agréable. Bote vas my lordtship und my latyship know dat Mr Delafal vas com from Italy?

Lady Vib. Come where?—To England?

Doc. He vas in the house below. I vas see und speak mit his falet.

L. Vib. In this hotel?

Doc. He vas yust arrife, und vas demandt dat he shall see my lordtship, oder my latyship.

Lady Vib. I am very sorry he is here. He is a

dun of the most disagreeable kind, and shall not see me; and I hope, my lord, you will no longer permit his addresses to Lady Jane. My word is given to Sir George. Come with me, doctor.

[*Exeunt* LADY VIBRATE *and Doctor.*

SCENE VIII.

Enter MR DELAVAL.

Del. Pardon me, my lord, if I intrude with too little ceremony. Something, I hope, will be allowed to a mind much disturbed, and a heart deeply wounded, and impatient to ease its pangs.

L. Vib. Which way deeply wounded, Mr Delaval?

Del. Can your lordship ask? Was it not with your permission I paid my addresses to Lady Jane? And was the ardour of my affection, or the extent of my hopes unknown?

L. Vib. Why, I did permit, and I did not.—I had my doubts.

Del. My visits were daily, their purpose was declared; and I should imagine I spoke more respectfully to say that you permitted, than that you connived at them.

L. Vib. True; but still I had my doubts.

Del. Those doubts have stung me to the soul; and I could wish you had expressed them more decidedly.

L. Vib. Impossible! Doubts here, doubts there, doubts every where. No rational man can be decided, on any point whatever. My doubts are my continual plagues; my whole life is consumed by them.

Del. It appears, my lord, you have conquered them on one subject.

L. Vib. Ay, indeed! I wish to Heaven I had! What subject is that?

Del. You have affianced your daughter to Sir George Versatile.

L. Vib. Humph!—Yes, and no. I have, and I have not. I cannot determine. Sir George is a prudent man; his estate is large; and the Versatiles are an ancient race. But your family is ancient: you are prudent; and the wealth left by your uncle is at least equal. What can I say? What can I do? I don't know which to take, nor which to refuse. I am everlastingly in these difficulties. I am harassed night and day by them: they are the night-mare; they sit upon my bosom, oppress me, suffocate me. I cannot act—I cannot move.

Del. This, my lord, may be an apology to yourself, but the consequence to me is misery. Your daughter lived in my heart: with her I had promised myself ages of happiness; and had cherished a passion, impatient, perhaps, but ardent and pure as her own thoughts. This passion your conduct authorized. My fortune, my life, my soul, were devoted to her. Mine was no light or wanton dalliance; nor did I expect a light and wanton conduct from the noble family of which your lordship is the head.

L. Vib. What do you mean, Mr Delaval? I told you I was undecided; and so I am still. My lady, you know, was never much your friend. Sir George is her favourite.

Del. And is Lady Jane equally changeable?

L. Vib. I don't know. She is *my* daughter; and, judging by myself, I should suppose she is perplexed and doubtful. She never, I believe, declared in your favour?

Del. Not expressly, my lord: she referred me to time and you. 'Tis true, I flattered myself her af-

fections were wholly mine. Should she prefer Sir George, or any other man, be my feelings what they will, I then am silenced. My heart could not be satisfied with cold compliance.—Oh no! 'tis of a different stamp. I am told she is not at home. I hope, however, she will not have the cruelty to deny me a last interview; till when I take my leave. Only suffer me to remark that, had you discovered in me any secret vice, any defects dangerous to the happiness of the woman I adore, you then were justified in your present conduct. But, if you have no such accusation to prefer, I must do my feelings the violence to declare, I cannot but think it highly unworthy of a man of honour. [*Exit.*

SCENE IX.

L. Vib. Mr Delaval!—Insolent! Highly unworthy of a man of honour! I will challenge him. He shall find whether I am a man of honour or no. I will challenge him. Harry!

SCENE X.

Enter Footman.

Har. My lord.

L. Vib. Run—tell that Mr Delaval——Hold—Yes, fly!—tell him——Stay. Get me pen, ink, and paper. I will teach him to insult——No; I will not do him the honour to write. Order him back.

Har. Order who, my lord?

L. Vib. He shall give me satisfaction. In that at least I am determined. He shall give——And yet,

what is satisfaction? Is it to be run through the body? Shot through the head? A man may then indeed be said to be satisfied. I had forgotten my doubts on duelling.—Tell my lady I wish to speak to her. No——

Har. She is here, my lord. [*Exit.*

SCENE XI.

Enter LADY VIBRATE *and the Doctor.*

Lady Vib. What is the matter, my lord? You seem to be even in a worse humour than usual.

L. Vib. Mr Delaval has treated me disrespectfully.

Lady Vib. Have not I a thousand times told you he is a disagreeable, impertinent person?

L. Vib. Why, God forgive me, but I really find myself of your ladyship's opinion. 'Tis a thing, I believe, that never happened before.

Lady Vib. And a thing, I believe, that will never happen again. I hope, my lord, you are now determined in favour of Sir George?

L. Vib. Positively; finally; I pledge my honour.

Lady Vib. You hear, doctor?

Doc. Ya, my coot laty; I vas hear.

L. Vib. I say, I pledge my honour. I authorise you, my lady, to deliver that message to the baronet; and that I may not have time to begin to doubt, I will instantly be gone. [*Exit.*

SCENE XII.

Lady Vib. This is fortunate.

Doc. Oh, fery mosh fortunate, fery mosh.

Lady Vib. Had Mr Delaval married my daughter, we should have had a continual sermon on reason, common sense, and good order: and these, and such like antediluvian notions must have been introduced to our family.

Doc. Ah, dat shall be pad, fery pad inteet, my coot laty.

Lady Vib. Now that Sir George is the man, the danger is over.

Doc. Dat is creat plessing!

Lady Vib. But what think you are my daughter's thoughts? I fear she has a kind of esteem for Delaval. He was her first lover.

Doc. Ya; she vas fery mosh esteem Mr Delafal, my coot laty.

Lady Vib. But I observe she listens with great pleasure to the gay prattle of Sir George.

Doc. Oh, fery creat inteet, my coot laty.

Lady Vib. We must second the rising passion; for we must get rid of that solemn sir.

Doc. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lady Vib. Go to her, doctor; convince her how intolerable it will be to have a husband whom she cannot quarrel with, nor reproach. Paint in the most lively colours the stupid life she must lead with so reasonable a man.

Doc. I shall do efery ting as vat shall make agréable, my coot laty. Dat is my vay. My laty, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, my laty.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Hall of the [illegible]. WILLIAMS *and* HARRY, LUCY *speaking to the Master of the Hotel.*

Will. All you say is very true, Mr Harry. Our masters suppose we have neither sense nor feeling, yet exact every thing that requires the five senses in perfection. They expect we should know their meaning before they open their lips; yet won't allow we have common understanding.

Har. More shame for 'em. I warrant, for all that, we can game, run in debt, get in drink, and be as proud and domineering as they for their lives.

Will. Yes, yes: let them but change places, and they would soon find we could rise to their vices, and they could sink to ours, with all the ease imaginable.

Har. They have no such notion though, Mr Williams.

Will. That is their vanity, Mr Harry. I have lived with Mr Delaval ever since he returned from India; and though he is a good——(*Sees* LUCY.) Hay!—Surely it must be her! Do you know that young woman, Mr Harry?

Har. No; but I have heard a strange story about her.

Will. Ay! It is—what? I am sure it is Lucy! What strange story have you heard?

Har. Why, that she came here late last night with a young gentleman, now above, pretending to be his waiting-maid!

Will. With a gentleman!—(*Aside.*) Oh, the jilt! Waiting-maid to a man! I never heard of such a thing!

Har. Nor any body else.

Will. (*Aside.*) The deceitful hussy!

Har. (*Hears a bell.*) That's my lord's bell. I told you he is never easy. I must go.

Will. (*Aside.*) I am glad of it. By all means, Mr Harry. Good day. [*Exit* HARRY.

SCENE II.

Will. Run away with a gentleman! Oh!

Lucy. (*Coming forward.*) I declare there is Mr Williams.

Will. (*Aside.*) What a fool was I to believe she loved me!

Lucy. (*Aside.*) How my heart beats! Dear, dear! I could wish to speak to him—but then if any harm should come of it?

Will. (*Aside.*) She shall not escape me.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) I should like to ask him how he does.—But I must not betray my dear lady. (*Going.*)

Will. (*Placing himself in her way.*) I beg pardon, ma'am.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) Does not he know me?

Will. I thought I had seen you before; but I find I am mistaken.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) What does he mean?

Will. You are very like a young woman I once knew.

Lucy. (*Aside.*) How angry he looks!

Will. But she was a modest, pretty-behaved person, and not an arrant jilt.

Lucy. Who is a jilt, Mr Williams?

Will. One Lucy Langford, that I courted and promised to marry: but I know better now.

Lucy. You do, Mr Williams?

Will. I do, madam.

Lucy. It is very well, Mr Williams!—it is very well! Pray let me go about my business.

Will. Oh, to be sure! I have no right to stop you.

Lucy. You have no right to speak to me as you do, Mr Williams.

Will. No, no; ha, ha, ha! I dare say I have not.

Lucy. (*Her passions rising.*) No, you have not; and so I beg you will let me pass. My mistress—I mean——

Will. Ay, ay! You mean your master!

Lucy. Do I, sir? Well, since you please to think so, so be it.

Will. All the servants know it is a man! Would you deny it?

Lucy. I deny nothing, Mr Williams; and if you are minded to make this an excuse for being as treacherous as the rest of your sex, (*Keeping down her sobs,*) you are very welcome, Mr Williams.—I shall neither die—nor cry, at parting.

Will. I dare say not. The young gentleman above stairs will comfort you.

Lucy. (*Bursts into tears.*) It is a base false story. I have no young gentleman above stairs, nor below stairs neither, to comfort me!—and you ought to know me better.

Will. Did you, or did you not, come here late last night?

Lucy. What of that?

Will. With a young gentleman?

Lucy. No—yes. Don't ask me such questions.

Will. No!—You are ashamed to answer them.

SCENE III.

MARIA, *from the staircase.*

Mar. (*Calls.*) Lucy!

Lucy. Ma'am—sir—coming, sir.

Will. There!—there! I will see what sort of a spark it is, however.

Lucy. (*Struggling.*) Be quiet, then! Keep away! You sha'n't!

Mar. (*Descending.*) What is the matter? Who is molesting you?

Lucy. (*To* MARIA.) Go back, sir!—go back!

Will. I will see; I am determined.

SCENE IV.

DELAVAL, *from a room door.*

Del. Williams!

Will. I tell you I will. (*Looking at* MARIA.) Hay! Bless me!

Mar. Why, Lucy!—Mr Williams!

Will. My young lady, as I live!

Del. Why do not you answer, Williams?

Will. Coming, sir.

Mar. Mercy! it is my brother's voice! What shall I do?

Lucy. Hide your face with your handkerchief, ma'am. Pull down your hat.

Mar. Pray do not betray me, Mr Williams.

Lucy. If you do, I will never speak to you as long as I have breath to draw.

Will. How betray?

Lucy. Don't say you know us. Mind! Not for the world.

[*Exeunt* MARIA *and* LUCY *up the staircase.*

SCENE V.

Del. What is it you are about, Williams?

Will. Nothing, sir.

Del. What do you mean by nothing? Whom were you wrangling with?

Will. Me, sir? Wrangling, sir?

Del. Why are you so confused?

Will. Why, sir, I—I committed a small mistake. I was asking—asking after a gentleman that—that—that proved not to be a gentleman; that is, not—not *the* gentleman that I supposed.

Del. Why did you not come back with your message? Have you learnt the address of Sir George?

Will. Yes, sir: he lives in Upper Grosvenor Street; his name on the door.

Del. Well, be in the way. The day shall not pass before I see him. My own wrongs I could forgive. He it seems is preferred; and perhaps I have no right to complain: but for his injuries to my sister he shall render me a dear account. [*Exit.*

Will. What can be the reason of Miss Delaval's disguise?

Lucy. (*Peeping from the top of the stairs.*) Hst! hst! Mr Williams!

Will. Is it you? Oh! now I shall know.

[*Exit up the staircase.*

SCENE VI.

LADY VIBRATE *and* LADY JANE.

Lady Vib. Really, daughter, I cannot understand you.

L. Jane. No wonder, madam; for I do not half understand myself.

Lady Vib. Is it possible you can hesitate? The good humour and complaisance of Sir George might captivate any woman.

L. Jane. They are very engaging; but they are dangerous.

Lady Vib. Which way?

L. Jane. His character is too pliant. If others are merry, so is he; if they are sad, he is the same. Their joys and sorrows play upon his countenance; but though they may slightly graze, they do not penetrate his heart. Even while he relieves, he scarcely feels them.

Lady Vib. Pshaw! He is a delightful man.

L. Jane. I grant he does his utmost. But it is a folly to be the slave even of an endeavour to please.

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, you are a whimsical young lady! Afraid of marrying a man because of his assiduous endeavours to please! As if that were a husband's failing! You can prefer no such accusation against Mr Delaval.

L. Jane. I own he is of a very different character.

Firm and inflexible, he imagines he makes virtue his rule, and reason his guide.

Lady Vib. Firm indeed! No, no; ferocious, obstinate, perverse. Sir George tries to be agreeable, and is successful: Mr Delaval has no fear of offending, and does not miss his aim.

L. Jane. Heaven help us! We all have faults and follies enough.

Lady Vib. Mr Delaval never was approved by me; and this morning he has insulted your father.

L. Jane. Insulted! How do you mean, madam? Mr Delaval is abroad. Has he written?

Lady Vib. No. He is here.

L. Jane. Here! And has he not thought proper to let me know of his arrival?

Lady Vib. No, no. The haughty gentleman has only thought proper to reproach Lord Vibrate for admitting the pretensions of Sir George. He is too proud to endure a competitor.

L. Jane. Indeed! Such pride is the very way to insure his competitor success. Insulted my father!

Lady Vib. I will leave you to judge how deeply, when I tell you that, fluctuating and undecided as Lord Vibrate always is, he was so offended, that he pledged his honour in favour of Sir George.

L. Jane. Insult my father, and not deign to let me know of his arrival!

Lady Vib. I hope, when Sir George comes, you will admit him.

L. Jane. Certainly, madam, certainly.

Lady Vib. And that Mr Delaval will be denied.

L. Jane. It seems I need give myself no concern about that: the gentleman will not even take the trouble to send up his name.

Lady Vib. I am glad you feel it properly.

L. Jane. Pardon me, madam; I will not condescend to feel it in the least. It shall not affect me; no, not for a moment. I had indeed conceived a

very different opinion of Mr Delaval. I am glad I have discovered my error, before it was too late. I could not have believed it possible! But it shall not disturb me. It shall give me no uneasiness. I will keep myself perfectly cool and unconcerned, and—ungenerous, unfeeling man! [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

Lady Vib. She is delightfully piqued, and Sir George will succeed!

Sir Geo. (*Without.*) Are the ladies above?

Foot. (*Without.*) Yes, sir.

Lady Vib. I hear him! The very sound of his voice inspires mirth.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Ah, my dear lady!

Lady Vib. I am infinitely glad to see you, Sir George. You are come at a lucky moment.

Sir Geo. Is then my fate decided?

Lady Vib. It is!—it is!

Sir Geo. Happy tidings!

Lady Vib. But first tell me——

Sir Geo. Any thing!—every thing! Speak!

Lady Vib. Are you not of my opinion?

Sir Geo. To be sure I am! What is it?

Lady Vib. That pleasure is the business of life.

Sir Geo. Oh, beyond all doubt!

Lady Vib. That inspecting accounts——

Sir Geo. Is vulgar drudgery!

Lady Vib. And looking after our affairs——

Sir Geo. A vile loss of time!

Lady Vib. That care in the face denotes——

Sir Geo. The owner a fool!

Lady Vib. And that sorrow is a very ridiculous thing!

Sir Geo. Fit only to excite laughter!

Lady Vib. Why then, Sir George, I am your friend.

Sir Geo. Ten thousand thousand thanks! But what says my lord?

Lady Vib. Would you believe it? He consents, has pledged his honour, and sent the message by me.

Sir Geo. Rapture! Enchantment!

Lady Vib. Yes; the reign of pleasure is about to begin!

Sir Geo. Light, free, and fantastic; dancing an eternal round!

Lady Vib. No domestic troubles!

Sir Geo. No grave looks!

Lady Vib. No serious thoughts!

Sir Geo. We will never think at all!

Lady Vib. No cares, no frowns!

Sir Geo. None, none; by Heavens, none! It shall be spring and sunshine all the year!

Lady Vib. Then our appearance in public!

Sir Geo. Splendid! Dazzling!—Driving to the opera!

Lady Vib. Dressing for Ranelagh!

Sir Geo. A phaeton to-day!

Lady Vib. A curricle to-morrow!

Sir Geo. Dash over the downs of Piccadilly, descend the heights of St James's, make the tour of Pall Mall, coast Whitehall——

Lady Vib. Back again to Bond Street——

Sir Geo. Scour the squares, thunder at the doors!

Lady Vib. How do you do? How do you do? How do you do?

Sir Geo. And away we rattle, till stone walls are but gliding shadows, and the whole world a galanty show.

Lady Vib. You are a charming man, Sir George! and Lady Jane is yours.

Sir Geo. My dear lady, your words inspire me! I am all air, spirit, soul! I tread the milky way, and step upon the stars!

Lady Vib. But you must not, before the marriage, talk thus to Lord Vibrate. Silly man! He and you will never agree.

Sir Geo. Oh yes, but we shall. I—I—I like his humour.

Lady Vib. Do you?

Sir Geo. Prodigiously! Whenever I am in his company, I am as grave as Good Friday.

Lady Vib. Indeed!

Sir Geo. He is full of sage reflection. So am I. Doubtful of every thing. So am I. Anxious for the present, provident for the future. So am I. Overflowing with prudential maxims; sententious, sentimental, and solemn. So am I.

Lady Vib. You sentimental!

Sir Geo. As grace before meat in the mouth of an alderman.

Lady Vib. You solemn!

Sir Geo. As the black patch on a judge's wig.

Lady Vib. I must tell you, Sir George, I hate sentiment.

Sir Geo. Oh! So do I!

Lady Vib. Solemnity is all a farce.

Sir Geo. And those that act it buffoons. I know it!

Lady Vib. I love mirth, pleasantry——

Sir Geo. Humour, whim, wit, feasting, revelry, shout, song, dance, and joke. So do I!—so do I!—so do I!

Lady Vib. The very mention of duties and cares makes me splenetic.

Sir Geo. Curse catch duties! I hate them! Give

me life, the wide world, the fair sun, and the free air!

Lady Vib. I say, give me midnight, the rattling of chariot wheels, and the lighted flambeau!

Sir Geo. Ay! A rout! A crash of coaches! A lane of footmen! A blazing staircase! A squeeze through the anti-chamber! Card tables! Wax lights! Patent lamps! Bath stoves and suffocation! Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Lady Vib. Exquisite! You are a delightful man!

Sir Geo. Am I?

Lady Vib. You enter perfectly into all my ideas.

Sir Geo. Do I?

Lady Vib. And describe them even better than I myself can.

Sir Geo. Oh, my dear lady!

Lady Vib. Yes, you do.

Sir Geo. No, no.

Lady Vib. But then, ha, ha, ha! that you should be able to fall in with my lord's absurdities so readily!

Sir Geo. Nothing more easy. I have one infallible rule to please all tempers. I learnt it of our friend the doctor.

Lady Vib. Sure! What is that?

Sir Geo. I prove that every body is always in the right.

Lady Vib. Prove my husband to be in the right! Do, if you can.

Sir Geo. My lord loves to be restless, and doubtful, and distressed: he delights in teasing and tormenting himself; and why should I interrupt his pleasures?

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! Very true.

Sir Geo. I fall in with his humour.—I shew him how rational it is, afford him new arguments for discontent, and encourage him to be miserable.

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, you malicious devil!

Sir Geo. My dear lady, you mistake. I do it from pure compassion. It makes him happy. Every child delights in the squeaking of its own trumpet; and shall I have the cruelty to break the toy? A well-bred person is cautious never to contradict. It is become a very essential requisite to say ay and no, in the most complying manner possible.

Lady Vib. Ah, Sir George, you are one of the dear inimitable few.

Sir Geo. Only a copy of your charming self.

Lady Vib. You and I must totally reform our stupid family. Amusement shall be our perpetual occupation.

Sir Geo. Day and night.

Lady Vib. We will commence with your marriage. It shall be splendid!

Sir Geo. A feast, a concert, a ball! The whole town shall ring with it!

Lady Vib. I hate a private wedding. A small select party is my aversion.

Sir Geo. Oh, nothing is so insipid! Pleasure cannot be calm.

Lady Vib. I wish to be seen, and heard——

Sir Geo. And talked of, and paragraphed, and praised, and blamed, and admired, and envied, and laughed at, and imitated!

Lady Vib. I live but in a crowd.

Sir Geo. Give me hurry, noise, embarrassment——

Lady Vib. Confusion, disorder——

Sir Geo. Tumult, tempest, uproar, elbowing, squeezing, pressing, pushing, squeaking, squalling, fainting!

Lady Vib. Exquisite! Transporting!

Sir Geo. You remember I receive masks this evening?

Lady Vib. Can I forget?

Sir Geo. You will be there?

Lady Vib. There? Ay! Though I should come in my coffin.

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! An excellent idea! I never yet saw a mask in the character of a *memento mori.*

Lady Vib. Ah! Turn about, and you will see a *memento mori* without a mask!

Sir Geo. What, my lord?

L. Vib. (*Without.*) I cannot tell. I will consider, and send an answer.

Lady Vib. Here he comes, to interrupt our delightful dreams: a very antidote to mirth and pleasure. He will give you a full dose of the dismals. But you must stay and speak to him. Remember, his honour is pledged: insist upon that. I pity, but cannot relieve you. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII.

Enter LORD VIBRATE.

L. Vib. I have been too sudden. I ought not to have pledged my honour. This is the consequence of hasty determination: of not doubting before we decide. Shall I never correct myself of that fault? (*Sees* SIR GEORGE. *They look full at each other, till* SIR GEORGE *catches the same dismal kind of countenance.*) Ah, Sir George! Here am I, brimful of anxiety and turmoil!

Sir Geo. Alas! man was born to trouble.

L. Vib. Perplexed on every side; thwarted in every plan: no domestic comfort, no friend to grieve with me, no creature to share my miseries.

Sir Geo. Melancholy case!

L. Vib. One crossing me, another blaming me, and my wife driving me mad!

Sir Geo. Distressing situation!

L. Vib. My cares laughed at, my vigilance mocked, my sufferings insulted! And why? Because I am cautious! because I doubt! because I am provident! What is man without money?

Sir Geo. A fountain without water.

L. Vib. A clock without a dial.

Sir Geo. (*Warming, and becoming rapid as he proceeds.*) What is it that buys respect, and honour, and power, and privilege, and houses, and lands, and wit, and beauty, and learning, and lords, and commons, and—

L. Vib. Why, money!—Then the manners of this dissipated age!

Sir Geo. They are truly shocking! They, they, they are absurd, ridiculous, odious, abominable.

L. Vib. And to what do they lead?

Sir Geo. To every thing that is horrid! To loss of peace, loss of property, loss of principle, loss of respect, bankruptcy, ruin, contempt, disease, and death!

L. Vib. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes: he's the man! I do not think I repent——Heaven be praised, Sir George, you are a man of understanding; an economist. You will regulate your family and affairs to my heart's content.

Sir Geo. Oh! it shall be my study! my daily practice! my duty! my delight!

L. Vib. You make me happy—and yet I cannot but wonder, being so rational a man, how you and my lady should agree so well.

Sir Geo. Dear, my lord, why so? Women are the most manageable good creatures upon earth.

L. Vib. Women good?

Sir Geo. Indubitably: when they are pleased.

L. Vib. So they say is the devil.

Sir Geo. The sweet angels deserve to be humoured. Their smiles are so enchanting! And should they frown, who can be angry, when we know the dear wayward syrens will only look the more bewitching, as soon as they are out of their pouts? It is so delightful to see the sun breaking from behind a cloud.

L. Vib. Pshaw! When a woman begins to grow old—

Sir Geo. Hush! The sun—The sun never grows old. I grant you that formerly there used to be old women: but there are none now!

L. Vib. Then you think me a fool for being wretched at my wife's thoughtlessness, caprice, and impertinence?

Sir Geo. No, I don't. Every body tells us that wives were born to be the plague of their husbands.

L. Vib. And mine is the greatest of plagues!

Sir Geo. What is a wife's duty? To obey her lord and master. 'Tis her marriage promise, and the law binds her to it. She is the minister of his pleasures, the handmaid of his wants, his goods, his chattels, his vendible property.

L. Vib. Ay: we find the husband may take the wife to market in a halter.

Sir Geo. In which I should hope he would afterward hang himself! [*Aside.*

L. Vib. My lady thinks of nothing but revelling, and racketing, and turning the world upside down!

Sir Geo. 'Tis a great pity.

L. Vib. Her tongue is my torment.

Sir Geo. The perpetual motion! It never ceases!

L. Vib. Then how can you like her company?

Sir Geo. She is not *my* wife.

L. Vib. No, or you would not be such good friends. Did she say any thing concerning the marriage?

Sir Geo. Oh, yes. She delivered your lordship's kind message.

L. Vib. What, that I had pledged my honour?

Sir Geo. Irrevocably.

L. Vib. I was very rash. Hasty resolutions bring long repentance—She insists that the nuptials shall be public!

Sir Geo. Does she, indeed?

L. Vib. For my part, I hate any display of vanity.

Sir Geo. It is extremely ridiculous! What would our ostentation, pomp, and magnificence be, but advertising ourselves to the world as fools and coxcombs?

L. Vib. Is that a rational use of money?

Sir Geo. Should it not be applied to relieve the aged, comfort the poor, succour the distressed—

L. Vib. What?

Sir Geo. Reward merit, encourage industry, and promote the public good?

L. Vib. Promote a farce!

Sir Geo. Very true: the public good is a farce!

L. Vib. The true use of money is to defend our rights——

Sir Geo. Revenge our wrongs, purchase for the present, provide for the future, secure power, buy friends, bid defiance to enemies, and lead the world in a string!

L. Vib. Ay! Now you talk sense. So, if I should consent, the wedding shall be private.

Sir Geo. Calm: tranquil.

L. Vib. No feasting.

Sir Geo. No dancing: no music: no pantomime pleasures: but all silent, serene, pure, and undisturbed.

L. Vib. We will just invite a select party.

Sir Geo. A chosen few.

L. Vib. None but our real and sincere friends.

Sir Geo. And then we shall be sure the house will hold them.

SCENE IX.

Enter HARRY.

Har. My lord, the builder desires to know if you will see him?

L. Vib. I am coming. I will be with him in five minutes.

Har. He says, he can stay no longer.

L. Vib. Then let him go. I will be with him presently.

Har. The lawyers have sent word they are waiting for your lordship, at Counsellor Demur's chambers.

L. Vib. Very well. There let them wait. The law is slow, and every man ought to be slow who is going to law. Come with me, Sir George. I have some papers to consult you upon.

Har. The trades-people too are below.

L. Vib. Thus it is! I am eternally besieged! I never have a moment to myself!

Har. This is the tenth time they have been here, by your lordship's own appointment.

L. Vib. What of that?

Har. They are become quite surly. They all abuse me; and some of them don't spare your lordship.

L. Vib. Do you hear, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Oh, shocking! Your trades-people are a sad unreasonable set. You cannot convince them that, if we were to keep our appointments, be punc-

tual in our payments, and know what we do want and what we do not, we should no longer be persons of fashion.

SCENE X.

Enter THOMPSON.

Thom. I am just come from the lawyers, my lord. The courts are sitting, their clients waiting, and if your lordship do not go immediately, they will be gone.

L. Vib. Very true; and this last opportunity of serving an ejectment will be lost. I have a thousand things to attend to. Would you be kind enough, Sir George, to go and——Hold—No—I don't know what to do! The estate is valuable: but law is damnable. I may lose the cause: it may cost even more than it is worth. Writs of error! Brought into Chancery! Carried up to the lords!

Sir Geo. Then the stupidity of juries, the fictions of law, the chicanery of lawyers, their tricking, twisting, turning, lying, wrangling, brow-beating, cajoling!

L. Vib. Their frauds, collusions, perjuries, robberies!

Sir Geo. Ay! Detinue, replevin, plea, imparlance, replication, rejoinder, rebutter, surrejoinder, surrebutter, demurrer——

L. Vib. Take breath! We ought both to demur; for it is the devil's dance, and both plaintiff and defendant are obliged to pay the piper. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The Apartments of LORD VIBRATE.

LADY JANE, *her Woman, the Doctor, and Footman.*

L. Jane. (*To Footman.*) Tell the young gentleman I wait his pleasure. (*Exit Footman.*) It is very singular! Men, I believe, do not often travel attended by waiting-maids!

Doc. Dat is de mystery, my Laty Shane.

L. Jane. What can he want to say to me?

Doc. Dat is de more mystery, my Laty Shane. He vas fery mosh young, und fery mosh handsome, und he vas fery mosh make fall in lofe mit you, my Laty Shane.

L. Jane. Nonsense!

Doc. My Laty Shane vas so full of de beauty dat you vas make sharm efery pody, my Laty Shane! Und as your name vas make mention, my Laty Shane, he vas all so pale as deaths!

L. Jane. (*Aside to her Woman.*) You are sure, you say, Mr Delaval made inquiries; and sent up his name?

Wom. (*To* LADY JANE.) Law, my lady! Could you think he would not? I saw him before ten o'clock; just as you sent me where I was kept so long: and, goodness! had you beheld what a taking he was in!

I warrant you, my lady, he asked a hundred and a hundred questions in a breath; and all about you!

L. Jane. Well, go now where I desired you.

Wom. Yes, my lady. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Footman returns, introducing MARIA. *Salute.*

Mar. (*Aside.*) Why do I tremble thus?

L. Jane. (*To Doctor.*) What a charming countenance!

Doc. Oh! fery mosh sharming!

L. Jane. How prepossessing his appearance!

Doc. Ya; he vas fery mosh possess.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. Sir George has sent this domino and mask, to know if they meet your ladyship's approbation.

L. Jane. Ha, ha, ha! Italian refinement, copied after some Venetian Cicisbeo. Put them down.

Mar. (*Aside. Regarding the domino and mask.*) Here his presents, and here his affections are now directed! How shall I support the scene?

L. Jane. You wish, sir, to speak to me.

Mar. (*Faltering.*) Embarrassed by the—liberty—I have taken—

L. Jane. Let me request you to waive all apology, and tell me which way I can oblige or serve you.

Mar. You are acquainted with Sir George—I—you—Pray pardon me. I am overcome. My spirits are—so agitated—

L. Jane. (*Eagerly reaching a chair.*) Sit down, sir. You are unwell! Bless me! Doctor!

Doc. (*To* LADY JANE *significantly.*) I vas tell my

Laty Shane vat it vas—Here, sair, you shmell mit dat elixir; und I shall make your neck-bandt tie loose, und— (*Going to loosen her neckcloth.*)

Mar. (*Alarmed, and putting him away.*) Pray forbear!

Doc. (*Aside. Imitating the heaving of the bosom.*) Ah ha! Der Teufel! He vas a vomans!

L. Jane. Are you better?

Mar. A moment's air. (*Goes to the window.*)

Doc. (*Aside.*) Dat vas de someting mystery!

Mar. (*To* LADY JANE.) If you would indulge me a few minutes in private?

L. Jane. By all means.—Doctor—(*Whispers.*)

Doc. Ya, ya, my Laty Shane, I vas unterstandt; und I vas do efery ting as vat shall make agréable. Dat is my vay——Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I vas unterstandt. My Laty Shane, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, my Laty Shane—(*Aside.*) Ah ha! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

L. Jane. Take courage, sir.

Mar. I am unequal to the task. This disguise sits ill upon me.

L. Jane. What disguise?

Mar. I am not what I seem. I——

L. Jane. Speak!

Mar. I am a woman.

L. Jane. Heavens!

Mar. Distressed——

L. Jane. By poverty?

Mar. Oh no. I come to claim your counsel.

L. Jane. In what way?

Mar. To prevent mischief—the shedding of blood.

L. Jane. The shedding of blood?

Sir Geo. (*Without.*) I will be with you again presently, my lady.

Mar. Mercy! It is Sir George! What shall I do? He must not see me! This way—(*Hurries on the domino and mask.*) Aid me, dear lady, to conceal myself; and excuse conduct which I cannot now explain.

L. Jane. Depend upon me, madam. (*Aside.*) This is as unaccountable as it is alarming!

SCENE IV.

MARIA *in the back ground.* SIR GEORGE *introduced by a Footman.*

Sir Geo. I come, my charming Lady Jane, flying and full of business, to consult you on a thousand important affairs!

L. Jane. Surely! What are they?

Sir Geo. Upon my soul, I don't know!

L. Jane. Hey-day!

Sir Geo. They have every one slipped my memory.

L. Jane. Miraculous!

Sir Geo. Whenever I have the inexpressible pleasure of enjoying your smiles, I can think of nothing else.

Mar. (*Aside.*) Perjured man!

L. Jane. My smiles! Ha, ha, ha! What if I should happen to frown?

Sir Geo. Impossible! No lowering clouds of discontent dare ever shade the heavenly brightness of your brow.

Mar. (*Aside.*) Oh! ıe, I

L. Jane. Very prettily said, upon my word. Wme to did you learn it?

Sir Geo. From you! 'Tis pure inspiration, ıved you are my muse.

L. Jane. No, ıc ; 'tis a flight beyond me. I love plain prose.

Sir Geo. So do I! A mere common-place, matter-of-fact man, I! The weather, the time of day, the history of where I dined last, the names and titles of the company, the dishes brought to table, the health, sickness, deaths, births, and marriages of my acquaintance, and such like tooth-pick topics for me! I am as literal in my narratives as any town-crier; and repeat them as often.

L. Jane. Yet I should wish to talk a little common sense.

Sir Geo. Oh! So should I! I assure you, I am for pros and cons and whys and wherefores. Your Aristotles, and Platos, and Senecas, and Catos are my delight! I honour their precepts, venerate their cogitations, and adore the length of their beards! which luckily reminds me of the masquerade. Is my domino to your taste?

L. Jane. Ha, ha, ha! Ancient sages, dominos, and taste.

Sir Geo. Did you not notice the colour?

L. Jane. Oh! The taste of a domino is in its colour?

Sir Geo. Why, no: but there may be meaning.

L. Jane. Explain.

Sir Geo. Mine is saffron.

L. Jane. What of that?

Sir Geo. Cruel question! Hymen and his robe.

L. Jane. Oh ho!

Mar. (*Aside.*) She is pleased with his perfidy.

L. Jane. A very significant riddle truly!

ar. (*Advancing.*) Are you so soon to be mar-
sir?

Geo. Bless me, Lady Jane! What frolicksome gentleman is this? In masquerade so early, and my domino!

Mar. Permit me once more to ask, if you are soon to be married?

Sir Geo. Your question, sir, is improperly addressed. Put it, if you please, to that lady.

Mar. (*Aside to* SIR GEORGE.) Is that the lady to whom the question ought to be put?

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) What does he mean?—Will you indulge me, sir, by taking off that mask?

Mar. No, sir.

Sir Geo. 'Tis mine; and I am induced to claim it, from the great curiosity I have to see your face.

Mar. Do you not adore this lady?

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) An odd question!—More than language can express!

Mar. (*Aside.*) Oh, falsehood!—Then I put myself under her protection.

Sir Geo. You know guardian angels when you see them. Pray, however, let us become acquainted.

Mar. For what reason?

Sir Geo. 'Twould gratify me. I should like you

Mar. Oh, no!

Sir Geo. I certainly should. There is something of pathos and music in your voice, which, which—I never heard but one to equal it.

Mar. And whose voice was that?

Sir Geo. Oh, that—that was a voice so ingenuous, so affectionate, so fascinating!

Mar. But whose voice was it?

L. Jane (*Aside.*) What does this mean?

Mar. Tell me, and you shall see my face.

L. Jane. (*Aside.*) Astonishing!

Sir Geo. I must not—I dare not—I shall never hear it more!

Mar. (*Aside.*) My feelings so overpower me, I shall betray myself. (*To* LADY JANE.) Permit me to retire.

L. Jane. You have alarmed and strangely moved me! I hope you will return?

Mar. Oh yes; and most happy to have your permission.

Sir Geo. Why do they whisper? (*To* MARIA *going.*) Will you not let me know who you are?

Mar. No.

Sir Geo. Why?

Mar. Because—I am one you do not love. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. One I do not love!

L. Jane. (*Aside*) This is incomprehensible!

Re-enter MARIA *hastily.*

Mar. (*To* LADY JANE.) Oh, madam!

L. Jane. What more is the matter?

Mar. For your life, do not mention the names of either of these gentlemen to the other!

L. Jane. What gentlemen?

Mar. He is coming! They do not personally know each other. If they should, there would be murder! I dare not stay. For the love of God, beware!

[*Exit masked, as* DELAVAL *enters.*

SCENE V.

Sir Geo. (*Calling.*) Hark ye, sir, come back! the domino! I shall want it in an hour or so—Who have we here?

Del. (*With much agitation of manner.*) Your ladyship's very humble servant.

L. Jane. Oh! How do you do? How do you do?

(*Aside.*) Who can that lady be? She knows them both, it seems; and knows their rivalship! Her terror is contagious! Is their hatred so deadly? I shall certainly betray them to each other.

Del. (*Aside.*) What a strange behaviour she puts on! Does she affect to overlook me? (*Observing* SIR GEORGE.) Who is this?

L. Jane. Are you just arrived?

Del. This very morning: sooner I fear than—than—was desired.

L. Jane. Do you think so? (*To* SIR GEORGE.) Why don't you go to Lady Vibrate? She is waiting.

Sir Geo. 'Tis the fate of forty.

L. Jane. What?

Sir Geo. To wait.—(*Aside. Eyeing* DELAVAL.) Who can this spark be, that she wants me gone?—Pray what is the name of the youth that has made so free with my domino and mask?

L. Jane. I really don't know.

Sir Geo. Don't know?

L. Jane. I can't answer questions at present. I am flurried; out of humour.

Del. I fear at my intrusion?

L. Jane. I wish you had come at another time.

Del. I expected my visit would be unwelcome; let me request, however, to say a few words.

L. Jane. Well, well; another time, I tell you: when I am alone.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) Oh ho!

Del. They were meant for your private ear.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) Were they so?

Del. (*Aside.*) By her confusion and his manner, I suspect this to be the base betrayer of my sister's peace: the man whose bare image makes my heart sicken, and my blood recoil.

L. Jane. (*Aside.*) Will they neither of them go? —Why do you loiter here, Sir Geo—(*Coughs.*)

Sir Geo. I must stay till the gentleman brings back my domino and mask, you know. (*Aside.*) I'll not leave them.

Del. (*Aside.*) I am persuaded it is he—Excuse me, sir; would you indulge me with the favour of your name?

Sir Geo. My name, sir! My name is—

L. Jane. (*Aside to* SIR GEORGE.) Hush! Don't tell it!

Sir Geo. (*To* LADY JANE.) Why not?

L. Jane. I insist upon it!

Sir Geo. Nay, then—My name, sir, is a very pretty name. Pray what is yours?

Del. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes, it must be he—Have you any reason to be ashamed of it?

Sir Geo. Sir! Did you please to speak? Upon my honour, you are a very polite, pleasant person.

Del. (*Aside.*) If I should be mistaken—I acknowledge, sir, there is but one man, whose name I *do*, but whose person I do *not* know, to whom that question would not have been rude in the extreme. Should you not be that man, I ask your pardon.

Sir Geo. Should I not! Sir, that I may be sure I *am* not, allow me to ask his name?

Del. His name is—

L. Jane. (*Screams, and sinks on the chair.*) Oh!

Del. Good Heavens!

Sir Geo. What has happened?

Del. Are you ill?

Sir Geo. Is it cramp, or spasm?

Del. Surely you have not broken a blood-vessel?

Sir Geo. Shall I run for a physician?

L. Jane. Instantly.

Sir Geo. I fly! Yet I must not leave you!

L. Jane. No delay, if you value my life.

Del. Your life! I will go!

L. Jane. (*Detaining him.*) No, no.
Sir Geo. I fly! I fly! [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Enter LADY JANE'S *Woman.*

Wom. Dear! my lady, what is the matter?
L. Jane. Lead me directly to my own room.
Del. Shall I carry you?
L. Jane. No: only give me your arm, and come with me. I want to talk to you. I wish to hear what you have to say. (*Aside to her woman.*) When Sir George comes back, tell him I am partly recovered, but must not be disturbed. It is my positive order.
Del. (*Aside.*) What does she whisper?
L. Jane. Stay—The doctor may come in; but not Sir George. Mind, on your life, not Sir George!—Come, sir.
Del. (*Aside.*) This sudden change is mysterious. Here is concealment.
L. Jane. Come, come.
[*Exeunt* DELAVAL *and* LADY JANE

SCENE VII.

Wom. I purtest, it has put me in such a fluster that I am quite all of a twitter!

Enter SIR GEORGE, *followed by* DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Sir Geo. Come along, doctor! Make haste. Where is Lady Jane?

Wom. In her own room.

Sir Geo. Is she worse?

Wom. No, sir; much better; but she must not be disturbed.

Sir Geo. Nay, nay, I must see her.

Wom. Indeed, sir, I can let nobody in but the doctor.

Sir Geo. Why so? Is not the gentleman I left here now with her?

Wom. I suppose so, sir.

Sir Geo. And I not admitted?

Wom. On no account whatever.

Sir Geo. He allowed, and I excluded! Indeed I shall attend the doctor.

Wom. Upon my honour, sir, you must not.

Sir Geo. Upon my honour, I will! My rival shall not escape me!

Doc. Ah ha! De rifal! Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! De young fer dat vas mit Laty Shane vas make you shealousy? Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! Bote dat is as noting at all. I shall tell you de someting mystery. He vas no yentlemans. Ah ha! He vas a vomans.

Sir Geo. A woman!

Doc. Ya, sair. He vas make acquaintance mit me, und I vas make acquaintance mit him; und he vas make faint, und I vas tie loose de neck-bandt, und den! Ah ha! I vas discober de mans vas a vomans!

Sir Geo. You astonish me!

Doc. Ya, sair. I vas make astonish myself.

Wom. Won't you go to my lady, doctor?

Doc. Ya, my tear. Let me do. Laty Shane is fery pad; und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und

de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all, &c.

[*Exit, gabbling.*

SCENE VIII.

Sir Geo. I should never have suspected a woman! A stout, tall, robust figure! And for what purpose disguise herself? That may be worth inquiry. I will wait, and if possible have another look at the lady.

SCENE IX.

Enter LORD VIBRATE *and* MR THOMPSON.

L. Vib. Two hundred and forty pounds! 'Tis a very large sum, Mr Thompson.

Thom. So large, my lord, that I have no means of paying it. I must languish out my life in a prison.

L. Vib. No, Mr Thompson, no: you shall not do that. I will—And yet—Two hundred—A prison—I don't know what to say. If I pay this money for you, I shall but encourage all around me to run in debt.

Thom. It is a favour too great for me to hope.

L. Vib. You are a worthy man, and a prison is a bad place—I—you—Pray what is your opinion, Sir George? Is it not dangerous for a man to have the character of being charitable?

Sir Geo. No doubt, my lord! It is the very certain way for his house to be besieged by beggars!

L. Vib. The master who pays the debts of one domestic makes himself the debtor of all the rest.

Sir Geo. He changes a set of servants into a set of duns! He first encourages them to be extravagant, and then makes it incumbent upon himself to pay for their follies and vices! He not only bribes them to be idle and insolent, but to waste his property as well as their own!

L. Vib. It is, as you say, a very serious case.—I —I am sorry for your misfortune, Mr Thompson—very sorry—but—really—

Sir Geo. Misfortune! What misfortune?

L. Vib. He has foolishly been bound for his sister's husband; and must go to prison for the debt.

Sir Geo. To prison?

L. Vib. You have shewn me how dangerous it would be for me to interfere.

Sir Geo. Very true: very true.—He has lived with your lordship several years?

L. Vib. He has; and I esteem him highly.

Sir Geo. A worthy man, whom it would be no disgrace to call your friend?

L. Vib. None. Still, however, consequences must be weighed. I must take time to consider. 'Tis folly to act in a hurry.

Sir Geo. Very true—Caution—caution—Is it a large sum?

L. Vib. No less than two hundred and forty pounds!

Sir Geo. Caution is a very excellent thing—Two hundred and forty—A fine virtue—Two—I would advise your lordship to it by all means—hundred and forty—(*Looks round.*) Will you permit me just to write a short memorandum: a bit of a note? (*Goes to a table.*) I must send to a certain place. (*Writes.*) Excuse me a moment.

L. Vib. What can be done in this affair, Mr Thompson?

Thom. Nothing, my lord. I am resigned. When I assisted my brother, I did no more than my duty. Those who lock me up in a prison may, for aught I know, do theirs: yet, though they are at liberty, and I shall be confined, I would neither change duties nor hearts with them. (*Going.*)

Sir Geo. Hark ye! Hark ye! Mr Thompson! Will you just desire this to be taken as it is directed? (*Aside to him.*) Don't say a word: 'tis a draft on my banker. Discharge your debt; and be silent—You are very right, my lord: we cannot be too considerate; lest, by mistaken benevolence, we should encourage vice.

Thom. Sir George! My lord!

Sir Geo. Why now will you not oblige me, Mr Thompson? Pray let that be delivered as it is directed. You surely will not deny me such a favour—For you know, my lord, if we give—

Thom. Indeed, I—

Sir Geo. Will you be gone? Will you be gone? (*Pushes him kindly off.*)—If we give without—without—

L. Vib. Poor fellow! I suppose he is afraid of being taken.

Sir Geo. Oh! Is that it?—If we give, I say, with—too—Pshaw! I have lost the thread of my argument.

L. Vib. I must own, this is a dubious case. Perhaps I ought to pay the money. (*Calls.*) Mr Thompson!—I don't think I ought to let him go to prison. What shall I do, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Whatever your lordship thinks best.

L. Vib. But there is the difficulty!—Mr Thompson! He is gone. How foolish this is now! (*As he is going off.*) Harry! Run after Mr Thompson, and call him back. One would think a man going to prison would, like me, be wise enough to doubt, and take time to consider of it. [*Exit.*

SCENE X.

Enter LADY VIBRATE.

Lady Vib. I assure you, Sir George, I am very angry. I have been waiting an age, expecting you would come and give your opinion on my masquerade dress.

Sir Geo. Why did not your ladyship put it on?

Lady Vib. On, indeed? It has been on and off twenty times: I have sent it to have some alteration. Beside, it is growing late: masks will be calling in on you, in their way to the opera-house, and you not at home to receive them!

Sir Geo. I ask ten thousand pardons, but you know I am the most thoughtless creature on earth.

Lady Vib. So I would have you. Were you like the sober, punctual Mr Delaval, I should hate you. But then—

SCENE XI.

DELAVAL *returning from* LADY JANE'S *apartment.*

Lady Vib. (*Aside.*) Here the wretch comes!

Sir Geo. So, so! Now I shall interrogate the lady. She has a very masculine air! (DELAVAL *bows to* LADY VIBRATE.) A tolerable bow that, for a woman!

Lady Vib. (*Aside.*) He wishes, I suppose, to sermonize me: but I shall not give him an opportunity. —Are you coming, Sir George?

Del. (*Aside.*) Ha!

Sir Geo. I will follow your ladyship in a minute.

Del. (*Aside.*) I was right! It is he!

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) She eyes me very ferociously!

Lady Vib. I shall just call in upon you: or, if not, we shall meet afterward. I expect you to be very whimsical and satiric upon all my friends; so pray put on your best humour. Grave airs, you know, are my aversion. [*Exit.*

SCENE XII.

Del. (*Aside.*) That was intended for me. Now for my gentleman.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) She really has a very fierce look! A kind of threatening physiognomy; and would make no bad grenadier.

Del. I understand your name is Sir George Versatile?

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) A bass voice too!—At your service, sir; or madam; I really cannot tell which.

Del. Cannot!

Sir Geo. No, I cannot, upon my soul! (*Aside.*) A devilish black chin!

Del. I have an account to settle with you, sir.

Sir Geo. Have you? (*Aside.*) What the plague can she mean?

Del. When can I find you at leisure, and alone?

Sir Geo. Alone?

Del. Yes, sir; alone.

Sir Geo. Must this account then be privately settled, madam?

Del. Madam!

Sir Geo. I beg your pardon! *Sir*, since you prefer it.

Del. If you know me, sir, your insolence is but a confirmation of the baseness of your character!

Sir Geo. I beg a million of pardons! I really do not know you.

Del. Then, sir, when you do, you will find cause to be a little more serious.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) What a Joan of Arc it is! There is danger she should knock me down.

Del. Be pleased to name your time.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) Zounds! She insists upon a tête-à-tête!—I hope you will be kind enough to excuse me, but I am just now so pressed for time, that I have not a moment to spare. Company is waiting. I must be gone to the masquerade. You, I presume, are for the same place, and are ready dressed. I am your most obedient—

Del. (*Seizing him.*) Sir, I insist upon your naming an hour, to-morrow; and an early one.

Sir Geo. Why, what the plague!—Here must be some mistake! Permit me to ask, do you know Dr Gosterman?

Del. Yes, sir.

Sir Geo. Was you not just now in danger of fainting?

Del. Faint? I faint!

Sir Geo. It would I think be a very extraordinary thing! But so he told me: with other particulars.

Del. Absurd! Dr Gosterman has not seen me for several months.

Sir Geo. He said, sir, you were a woman; and perhaps, from that error, I may have unconsciously provoked you to behaviour which would else have been rather strange. Have I given you any other offence?

Del. Yes, sir; a mortal one.

Sir Geo. Mortal!

Del. And mortal must be the atonement.

Sir Geo. If so, the sooner the better. Let it be immediately.

Del. No. I have serious concerns to settle. So have you! 'Tis time you should think of things very different from masquerading. Name your hour to-morrow morning; then, take an enemy's advice, retire to your closet, and make your will.

Sir Geo. To whom am I indebted for this high menace, and this haughty warning? Your name, sir?

Del. That you shall know when we next meet: not before.

Sir Geo. What age are you, sir?

Del. Age!

Sir Geo. Such peremptory heroes are not usually long lived.

Del. You are right, sir; my life is probably doomed to be short. But this is trifling. Name your hour.

Sir Geo. At ten to-morrow morning.

Del. The very time I could wish. I will be with you at your own house, inform you who I am, and then—

Sir Geo. So be it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIII.

Changes to the House of SIR GEORGE. *A suite of apartments richly decorated, and numerous Masks: some dancing; others passing and repassing.*

SIR GEORGE *and* LADY VIBRATE *advance unmasked.*

Lady Vib. What is the matter with you, Sir George? You are suddenly become as dull and almost as intolerable as my lord himself.

Sir Geo. I own, I had something on my spirits.

But it is gone. Your ladyship's vivacity is an antidote to splenetic fits.

Lady Vib. Oh, if you are subject to fits of the spleen, I renounce you.

Sir Geo. No, no! Heigho! Ha, ha, ha! Let me go merrily down the dance of life!

Lady Vib. Ay! or I will not be your partner.

Sir Geo. As for recollections, retrospective anxieties, and painful thoughts, I—I—I hate them. They shall not trouble me. For if a man, you know, were to be sprung on a mine to-morrow, ha, ha, ha! it were folly to let that trouble him to-day.

Lady Vib. Sprung on a mine? You talk wildly!

Sir Geo. True. I am a wild unaccountable nondescript. I am any thing, every thing, and soon may be—

Lady Vib. What?

Sir Geo. Nothing. Strange events are possible; and possible events are strange.

Lady Vib. Come, come, cast off this disagreeable humour, and join the masks.

Sir Geo. With all my heart. A mask is an excellent utensil, and may be worn with a naked face.

Lady Vib. (*Retiring.*) Why don't you come? You used to be all compliance.

Sir Geo. So I fear I always shall be. 'Tis my worst virtue. Call it a vice, if you please; and perhaps it is even then my worst.

Lady Vib. I really do not comprehend you.

Sir Geo. No wonder. Man is an incomprehensible animal! But no matter for that. We will be merry still, say I—at least till to-morrow.

Lady Vib. (*Joins the masks.*) Yonder is Lady Jane.

SCENE XIV.

Sir Geo. Nay then, I am on the wing!

Mar. (*Advancing.*) Whither?

Sir Geo. Ah! Have I found you again? So much the better! I have been thinking of you this half hour.

Mar. Ay! That must have been a prodigious effort!

Sir Geo. What?

Mar. To think of one person for so great a length of time.

Sir Geo. True. Were you my bitterest enemy, you could not have uttered a more galling truth. I am glad I have met with you, however.

Mar. So am I. 'Tis my errand here.

Sir Geo. You now, I hope, will let me see your face?

Mar. I might, perhaps, were it but possible to see your heart.

Sir Geo. No, no: that cannot be. I have no heart.

Mar. I am sorry for it!

Sir Geo. So am I. But come, I wish to be better acquainted with you.

Mar. And I wish you to be better acquainted with yourself. You know not half your own good qualities.

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! My good qualities? Heigho!

Mar. Your fame is gone abroad! Your gallantry, your free humour, your frolics in England and Italy, your—A propos: I am told Lady Jane is captivated by the ardour and delicacy of your passion! Is it true?

Sir Geo. Are you an inquisitor?

Mar. Are you afraid of inquisitors?

Sir Geo. Yes.

Mar. I believe you.

Sir Geo. You may. Keep me no longer in this suspense. Let me know who you are?

Mar. An old acquaintance.

Sir Geo. Of mine?

Mar. Of one who was formerly your friend.

Sir Geo. Whom do you mean?

Mar. You must have been a man of uncommon worth; for I have heard him bestow such praises upon you that my heart has palpitated if your name was but mentioned!

Sir Geo. Of whom are you talking?

Mar. Lord! that you should be so forgetful!—That can only have happened since you became a person of fashion: for no man once remembered his friends better. It is true, they were then useful to you.

Sir Geo. Sir, I—Be warned! Pursue this no farther.

Mar. You little suspected at that time you were on the eve of being a wealthy baronet. Oh no! And to see how kind and grateful you were to those who loved you! No one would have believed you could so soon have become a perfect man of the mode; and with so polite and easy an indifference so entirely have forgotten all your old acquaintance! I dare say you scarcely remember the late Colonel Delaval.

Sir Geo. Sir!

Mar. His daughter too has utterly slipped your memory?

Sir Geo. I insist on knowing who you are.

Mar. How different it was when, your merit neglected, your spirits depressed, and your poverty despised, you groaned under the oppression of an unjust and selfish world! How did your drooping spirits revive by the fostering smiles of the man who first

noticed you, took you to his house and heart, and adopted you as his son! Poor Maria! Silly girl, to love as she did! Where is she?

Sir Geo. This is not to be endured!

Mar. What was her offence? You became a baronet! Ay! True, that was her crime. Yet, when your fortunes were low, it was not imputed to you as guilt.

Sir Geo. (*Aside.*) Damnation!

Mar. Are your new friends more affectionate than your old? Fortune smiles, and so do they. Poor Maria! Has Lady Jane ever heard her name? Will you invite her to your wedding? (*Her voice continually faltering.*) Do. She should have been your bride: then let her be your bride-maid—She is greatly altered—She will be less beautiful—now—than her fair rival. Her birth is not quite so high—but—if a—heart—a heart—a heart—(*Struggling with her feelings, sinks into* SIR GEORGE'S *arms, and her mask falls off.*)

Sir Geo. Heavens and earth! 'Tis she! Help! 'Tis Maria! Who waits?

SCENE XV.

Enter LADY JANE.

L. Jane. What is the matter?

Sir Geo. Help! Help!—Salts! Hartshorn!—Water! Help!

L. Jane. Bless me! This lady again.

Sir Geo. Is she then known to you?

L. Jane. No! Who is she?

Sir Geo. Quick! Quick!

L. Jane. Nay, but tell me?

Sir Geo. I cannot! Must not!

L. Jane. Must not?

Sir Geo. Dare not!—She revives; and, to my confusion, will soon tell you herself.—Maria! Are you better, Maria?

Mar. I am very faint.

L. Jane. My carriage is at the door. Will you trust yourself to me?

Mar. Oh yes. I am weak—Very weak, and very foolish! But I shall not long disturb your happiness. I hope soon to be past that.

Sir Geo. Past! Oh, Maria!—I—have no utterance—Lady Jane, you will presently know of me what to know of myself is—Oh!—No matter. Not then for my sake, but for pity, for the love of suffering virtue, be careful of this lady; whom, when you know, as soon you must, you will despise and abhor the lunatic, the wretch, that could—Maria—I—I—

[*Exit abruptly.*

SCENE XVI.

Enter DELAVAL.

Del. What is the matter? Any accident? Was not that Sir George?——Good God! My sister!

L. Jane. Your sister!

Del. How comes this? Why this dress? And with that apostate! that wretch! Speak, Maria!

Mar. I cannot.

L. Jane. Mr Delaval, be more temperate. Your sister's spirits and health ought not to be trifled with by your violence. I do not know, though I think I guess, her story. I hope you have a brother's tenderness for her?

Del. That shall be shortly seen. A few hours will shew how dear she is to my heart.

L. Jane. I fear you cherish bad passions: such as I never can love, and never will share.

Del. Well, well, Lady Jane, that is not to be argued now. I am a man, and subject to the mistakes of man. There are feelings which can, and feelings which cannot be subdued. I must run my course, and take all consequences.

Mar. Oh God! in what will they end?

L. Jane. No more of this, Mr Delaval. Come with me: lead your sister to my carriage. She shall be under my care. She can inspire those sympathies which your too stubborn temper seems to despise.

Del. Indeed, indeed, you wrong me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

MARIA *in her proper dress,* LADY JANE *and* LUCY, *Footmen waiting. Breakfast equipage on the table.*

L. Jane. Remove those things. We have done. [*Exeunt Footmen.*

Mar. What is it o'clock?

Lucy. Just struck ten, ma'am.

L. Jane. Lady Vibrate is a sad rake! She did not leave the masquerade till five this morning.

Mar. And Sir George not there!

L. Jane. After the discovery of last night, could you suppose he would be seen revelling at such a place?

Mar. I dread another and more horrible cause! My brother!

L. Jane. Mr Delaval, you know, slept in this house.

Mar. But he has been out these two hours!

Lucy. What then, ma'am? Is not Mr Williams on the watch? You know, ma'am, you may trust Mr Williams with your life.

Mar. If all were safe, he would be back.

L. Jane. Pray, calm your spirits.

Mar. Nay, nay, but Mr Williams must have been here before this, if something fatal had not happened!

Lucy. I am sure, ma'am, you frighten me to death!

L. Jane. (*Aside.*) Her terrors are but too well founded!

Mar. (*Footsteps without.*) What noise is that?

Lucy. Bless me!

L. Jane. See who it is.

Lucy. (*After opening the door.*) Law, ma'am! I declare it is Mr Williams!

SCENE II.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Lucy. Well, Mr Williams! Every thing is right! is not it? All is as it should be?

Will. That is more than I know.

Mar. Why, then, the worst is past.

Will. No, ma'am, I can't say that, either.

L. Jane. Nay, but what news do you bring?—Speak.

Will. Why, you know my master last night made inquiries how to find the chambers of Counsellor Demur: so, when he went out this morning, I observed your directions, and followed him. He went to the counsellor's, in Lincoln's Inn; and there I left him, and hurried away to Sir George's, to inquire and hear all I could: though it was rather unlucky that I was not acquainted in the family.

L. Jane. Did not you make use of my name?

Will. Oh yes, my lady. Beside, servants, your ladyship knows, are not so suspicious as their masters: they soon become friendly together: so in five minutes Sir George's valet and I were on as intimate a footing as we could wish.

Mar. And what did he say? Tell me.

Will. Why, ma'am, he said that Sir George did not leave his own house last night, after the fainting of the young gentleman.

Lucy That was you, you know, ma'am.

Will. And, what is more, that he did not go to bed; but walked up and down the room till daylight in the morning; and then called I don't know how often to warn the servants that he should not be at home to any body whatever, except to a strange gentleman.

Mar. My brother!

Will. Why, yes, ma'am, according to the description, it could be nobody else.

L. Jane. And at what hour was Mr Delaval to be there?

Will. (*Aside.*) Zooks! I forgot to ask—That, that, my lady, I did not learn. So, this being all the servants told me, I ran post haste to make my report to you.

Mar. The worst I foreboded will happen!

L. Jane. What can be done?

Will. Perhaps it will be best for me to go back to Sir George's, wait for the arrival of my master, and, if he should come, hasten away as fast as I can to inform you of it.

Lucy. That is a good thought, Mr Williams! Is not it, madam? A very good thought, indeed! Don't you think it is, my lady?

L. Jane. I know not what we can do better.

Mar. Nay, but while Williams is bringing us the intelligence, every thing we most dread may happen.

Lucy. Dear! So it may!

Will. Suppose then, madam, I should stay at my post, and dispatch Sir George's valet to you with the news?

Lucy. Well, that is the best thought of all! I am sure you will own it is, madam.

Mar. I know not what to think.

L. Jane. We must resolve; or, while we are deliberating—

Mar. Merciful God! Run, Williams! Fly! Save my brother! Save Sir George!

L. Jane. Succeed but in this, and command all we have to give.

Will. I will do my best.

Lucy. That I am sure he will. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Changes to the House of SIR GEORGE.—SIR GEORGE *walking in perturbation of mind. After some time he looks at his watch.*

Sir Geo. He will soon be here—Five minutes—but five minutes, and then—(*Walks again, throws himself on a sofa, takes up a book, tosses it away, and rises.*) What is man's first duty? To be happy. Short-sight-

ed fool! The happiness of this hour is the misery of the next! (*Again walks and looks at his watch.*)—What is life? A tissue of follies! Inconsistencies! Joys that make reason weep, and sorrows at which wisdom smiles. Pshaw! There is not between ape and oyster so ridiculous or so wretched a creature as man. (*Walks.*) Oh! Maria! (*Again consulting his watch.*) I want but a few seconds. My watch perhaps is too fast. (*Rings.*)

Enter Footman.

Sir Geo. Has nobody yet been here?

Foot. No, sir.

Sir Geo. 'Tis the time to a minute. (*Loud knocking.*) Fly! If it be the person I have described, admit him. [*Exit Footman.*

Sir Geo. Now let the thunder strike!

SCENE IV.

DELAVAL *introduced. They salute.*

Sir Geo. Good morning, sir!

Del. You recollect me?

Sir Geo. Perfectly.

Del. 'Tis well.

Sir Geo. I have been anxious for your coming. Your menace lives in my memory; and I shall be glad to know the name of him who has threatened such mortal enmity.

Del. A little patience will be necessary. I must preface my proceedings with a short story.

Sir Geo. I shall be all attention. Please to be seated. Wave ceremony, and to the subject—(*They sit.*) Now, sir.

Del. About six years ago, a certain youth came up from college; poor and unprotected. He was a scholar, pleasing in manner, warm and generous of temper, of a respectable family, and seemed to possess the germ of every virtue.

Sir Geo. Well, sir.

Del. Hear me on: my praises will not be tedious. Chance made him known to a man who desired to cherish his good qualities; and the purse, the experience, and the power of his benefactor, such as they were, he profited by to the utmost. Received as a son, he soon became dear to the family: but most dear to the daughter of his friend: whose tender age and glowing affections made her apt to admire the virtues she heard her father so ardently praise and encourage.—You are uneasy?

Sir Geo. Be pleased to continue,

Del. The assiduities of the youth to gain her heart were unabating; and his pretensions, poor and unknown as he then was, were not rejected. The noble nature of his friend scorned to make his poverty his crime.—Why do you bite your lip? Was it not generous?

Sir Geo. Sir!

Del. (*Firmly.*) Was it not?

Sir Geo. Certainly! Nothing could equal the—generosity.

Del. The health of his benefactor was declining fast; and the only thing required of the youth was that he should qualify himself for the cares of life, by some profession. He therefore entered a student in the Temple; and the means were furnished by his protector, till the end was obtained. Was not this friendship?

Sir Geo. It was.

Del. The lady, almost a child when first he knew her, increased in grace and beauty faster than in

years. Sweetness and smiles played upon her countenance. She was the delight of her friends, the admiration of the world, and the coveted of every eye. Lovers of fortune and fashion contended for her hand: but she had bestowed her heart—had bestowed it on a—Sit still, sir; I shall soon have done. I am coming to the point. Five years elapsed; during which the youth received every kindness friendship could afford, and every proof chaste affection had to give. These he returned with promises and protestations that seemed too vast for his heart—I would say for his tongue.—Are you unwell, sir?

Sir Geo. Go on with your tale.

Del. His benefactor, feeling the hand of death steal on, was anxious to see the two persons dearest to his heart happy before he expired; and the marriage was determined on, the day fixed, and the friends of the family invited. The intended bridegroom appeared half frantic with his approaching bliss. Now, sir, mark his proceeding. In this short interval, by sudden and unexpected deaths, he becomes the heir to a title and large estate. Well! Does he not fly to the arms of his languishing friend? Does he not pour his new treasures and his transports into the lap of love? Coward and monster!

Sir Geo. (Both starting up.) Sir!

Del. Viler than words can paint! Having robbed a family of honour, a friend of peace, and an angel of every human solace, he fled like a thief, and concealed himself from immediate contempt and vengeance in a foreign country. But contempt and vengeance have at length overtaken him: they beset him: they face him at this instant. The friend he wronged is dead: but the son of that friend lives, and I am he!

Sir Geo. 'Tis as I thought!

Del. You are—I will not defile my lips by telling you what you are.

Sir Geo. I own that what I have done—

Del. Forbear to interrupt me, sir. You have nothing to plead, and much to hear. First say, did my sister, by any improper conduct, levity of behaviour, or fault or vice whatever, give you just cause to abandon her?

Sir Geo. None! None! Her purity is only exceeded by her love.

Del. Then how, barbarian, how had you the heart to disgrace the family, and endanger the life of a woman whose sanctified affection would have embraced you in poverty, pestilence, or death; and who, had she possessed empires, would have bestowed them with an imperial affection?

Sir Geo. Sir, if you ask, Have I committed errors? call them crimes if you will, Yes. If you demand, Will I justify them? No. If you require me to atone for them, here is my heart: you have wrongs to revenge: strike: and, if you can, inflict a pang greater than any it yet has known.

Del. Justice is not to be disarmed by being braved. To the question. It can be no part of your intention, and certainly not of mine, that you should marry my sister. Something very different must be done.

Sir Geo. What? Name it.

Del. You must give me an acknowledgment, written and signed by yourself, that you have basely and most dishonourably injured, insulted, and betrayed Maria Delaval; and this paper, immediately as I leave your house, I shall publish in every possible way; till my sister shall be so appeased, and honour so satiated, that vengeance itself shall cry, Hold!

Sir Geo. Written by me! Published! No. I will sign no such paper.

Del. So I supposed; and the alternative follows. Here I am: nor will I quit you, go where you will,

till you shall consent to retire with me to some place from which one of us must never return. Should I be the victor, flight, banishment from my native country, and the bitterest recollections of the villainies of man, must be the fate of me and my sister. If I fall, you then may triumph, and she languish and die unrevenged. This, or the written acknowledgment. Consider, and chuse.

Sir Geo. What can I answer? The paper you shall not have. My life you are welcome to: take it.

Del. Have you not brought disgrace enough on my family? Would you make me an assassin? My sister and my father loved you. Let me, if possible, feel some little return of respect for you.

Sir Geo. Having wronged the sister, would you have me murder the brother? Already the most guilty of men, would you make me the worst of fiends? Though an enemy, be a generous one.

Del. Plausible sophist! The paper, sir: or, man to man and arm to arm, close the scene of my dishonour, or your own. The written acknowledgment. Determine. (*Walks away and views the pictures.*)

Sir Geo. (*Apart.*) Why, ay! 'Tis come home! I have sought it, deserved it; 'tis fallen, and the rock must crush the reptile!—Then welcome ruin. The sword must decide. (*Goes to take his sword, but stops.*) The sword? What! Betray the sister and assassinate the brother? Oh God! And such a brother! Stern, but noble-minded: indignant of injury, peerless in affection, and proud of a sister whom the world might worship; but whom I, worthless wretch, in levity and pride of heart, have abandoned. (*Aloud.*) Mr Delaval!

Del. Have you resolved to sign?

Sir Geo. Hear me.

Del. The written acknowledgment!

Sir Geo. My behaviour to your sister is—what I cannot endure to name—'Tis hateful! 'Tis infamous!

My obligations to your most excellent father, the respect you have inspired me with, and my love for Maria—

Del. Insolent! Insufferable meanness! The paper, sir!

Sir Geo. Angry though you are, Mr Delaval, you must hear me. I say, my love, my adoration of Maria has but increased my guilt. It has made me dread her contempt. I durst not face the angel whom I had so deeply injured.

Del. Artifice! Evasion! Cowardice!—Your signature!

Sir Geo. (*Snatching up his sword from the table.*) You shall have it—Follow me.

Del. Fear me not.

Sir Geo. (*Stopping short.*) Hold, Mr Delaval.—Justice is on your side. If your firmness be not a savage spirit of revenge, if you do not thirst for blood, you will feel my only resource will be to fall on your sword. I cannot lift my arm against you.

Del. Then sign the acknowledgment.

Sir Geo. Can you in the spirit even of an enemy ask it? Do you not already despise me enough?—Think for a moment: am I the only man that ever erred? Is it so wonderful that a giddy youth, whose habitual failing was compliance, by sudden accident elevated to the pinnacle of fortune, surrounded by proud and selfish relations, of whose approbation I was vain, is it so strange that I should be overpowered by their dictates, and yield to their entreaties? Your friendship or my death is now the only alternative. Suppose the latter: will it honour you among men? At the man of blood the heart of man revolts! Will it endear you to Maria? Kind forgiving angel, and hateful to myself as her affection makes me, I last night found that affection still as strong, still as pure, as in the first hour of our infant loves. Lady Jane—

Del. Forbear to name her! 'Tis profanation from

your lips! No more casuistry! No subterfuge! The paper!

Sir Geo. Can no motives—

Del. None!

Sir Geo. My future life, my soul, shall be devoted to Maria.

Del. The paper!

Sir Geo. Obdurate man! (*Reflects a moment.*) You shall have it. (*Goes to the table to write, during which* DELAVAL *remains deep in thought and much agitated.*) Here, sir! since *you* will not be generous, let *me* be just. 'Tis proper I remove every taint of suspicion from the deeply-wronged Maria.

Del. (*Reads with a faltering voice.*) "I George Versatile, once poor and dependent, since vain, fickle, and faithless, do under my hand acknowledge I have perfidiously—broken my pledged promise—to the most deserving—lovely—and—(*Begins in much agitation to tear the paper.*)

Sir Geo. Mr Delaval?

Del. Damn it—I can't—I can't speak. Here! Here! (*Striking his bosom.*)

Sir Geo. Mr Delaval?

Del. My brother!

Sir Geo. (*Falls on his neck.*) Can it be? My friend!

Del. This stubborn temper—always in extremes! The tyger, or the child.

Sir Geo. Oh no! 'Twas not to be forgiven! Best of men!

Del. Well, well: we are friends.

Sir Geo. Everlastingly! Brothers!

Del. Yes; brothers.

SCENE V.

Enter WILLIAMS *in great haste.*

Will. Sir!

Del. How now?

Will. I beg your pardon, but Lady Jane and your sister are below. They insist on coming up, and the servants are afraid to—

Sir Geo. Maria! Let us fly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

The Apartments of LORD VIBRATE.

LADY VIBRATE *and the Doctor.*

Doc. Ya, my coot laty; dat vas efery vordt so true as vat I say. I vas discober it vas a vomans; und Sair Shorge, und my Laty Shane, und de vaiting-vomans vas discober to me all as vat I say more.

Lady Vib. Ay, ay! That was the reason Sir George was not at the masquerade.

Doc. Ya, my coot laty.

Lady Vib. I observed he was in a strange moody humour.

Doc. My Lordt Fibrate vas fery mosh amazement, ven I vas make him discober all as vat I vas make discober mit my coot laty.

Lady Vib. Sir George has behaved very improperly.

SCENE VII.

Enter LORD VIBRATE.

L. Vib. So, so, so! All I foreboded has come to pass! The day is slipped away, a new one is here, and every possibility of recovering the estate is gone!

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Vib. Do you laugh?

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! I do, indeed!

L. Vib. Is your daughter's loss the subject of your mirth?

Lady Vib. Ha, ha, ha! No, no; not her loss, but your positive determination to prove I did not know you! Ha, ha, ha! When I told you that even that motive would not be strong enough, how you stormed! "But it will, my lady! But it won't, my lord! I say it will, my lady! I say it won't, my lord!" Ha, ha, ha! Will you believe that I know you now?

L. Vib. What shall I do? Advise me, doctor.

Doc. I vas adfice, my coot lordt, dat you shall do efery ting as vat you please.

Lady Vib. Ay, think! ask advice. Ha, ha, ha!—Now that you can do nothing, the inquiry will be very amusing.

SCENE VIII.

Enter THOMPSON.

L. Vib. Well, Thompson, what says Counsellor Demur? Has the time absolutely elapsed?

Thom. Absolutely, my lord.

Lady Vib. How wisely your lordship doubts, before you decide! Hay, doctor?

Thom. I have good news, nevertheless.

L. Vib. Good news? Speak! Of what kind?

Thom. The honesty of the opposite party.

L. Vib. What, the holder of the land?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

L. Vib. Which way? Explain.

Thom. He has engaged to Mr Demur, I being present, that, if your lordship will only shew the legality of your late title, he will resign the estate.

L. Vib. Is it possible?

Lady Vib. It cannot be! The last purchaser is in India.

Thom. The last purchaser is dead; and it has descended to one whom you, my lord and lady, little suspect to be its possessor.

L. Vib. Who?

Lady Vib. Who?

Thom. Mr Delaval.

Lady Vib. Mr Delaval!

L. Vib. Mr Delaval resign it on exhibiting the legality of my title?

Thom. He will, my lord.

L. Vib. Did he make no conditions?

Thom. None.

L. Vib. What, did he not mention Lady Jane?

Thom. Her name did escape his lips; but rising passion, and, if I rightly read his heart, emotions of the most delicate sensibility, immediately closed them: as if he would not endure the love he bore her to be profaned by any the slightest semblance of barter and sale.

L. Vib. What do you say to that, Lady Vibrate? What do you say to that?

Lady Vib. The proceeding is honourable, I own.

L. Vib. Did I not always tell you Mr Delaval was a man of honour?

Lady Vib. You tell me, my lord? Why, you were going to challenge him yesterday morning!

L. Vib. He is no such weather-cock as your favourite, Sir George.

Lady Vib. You mistake: Sir George is no favourite of mine. Is he, doctor?

Doc. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

L. Vib. What, he did not come to make a buffoon of himself, for your diversion, at the masquerade last night! Hay, doctor?

Doc. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my good lordt.

Lady Vib. His perfidious treatment of Miss Delaval is unpardonable.

Doc. Dat vas pad! Fery pad, inteet!

L. Vib. Ay, ay! He has plenty of words, but he has no heart.

Doc. Dat is pad! Fery pad, inteet!

Thom. Pardon me, my lord: Sir George may have committed mistakes, but to the goodness of his heart I am a witness.

Lady Vib. You?

L. Vib. How so?

Thom. By his benevolence I was yesterday relieved from the disgrace and the horrors of a prison.

L. Vib. Indeed!

Lady Vib. Which way?

Thom. He paid a debt, which, had I been confined, I never could have discharged; and, for this unexpected act of humanity, he would not suffer so much as my thanks.

L. Vib. Did Sir George pay the two hundred and forty pounds, Mr Thompson?

Thom. The note, which he pretended to write and send by me, was a draft on his banker for three hundred.

L. Vib. Why, he confirmed all my arguments against it, and added twice as many of his own.

Doc. Sair Shorge vas alvay make agréable. Dat vas his vay.

Lady Vib. I own, however, I am still more surprised at the unexampled generosity of Mr Delaval.

SCENE IX.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Lady Vib. Where is your master, Mr Williams?

Will. They are all coming, my lady.

Lady Vib. Who is coming?

Will. Mr Delaval, Lady Jane, Miss Delaval, and Sir George. There has been sad work! But it is all over, and they are now so happy! Here they are.

SCENE X.

Enter MR DELAVAL, *leading* LADY JANE, *and* SIR GEORGE *with* MARIA, *followed by* LUCY.

L. Vib. Mr Delaval, I have great obligations to you. Thompson has been telling me of your disinterested equity.

Del. The obligation, my lord, was mine. Your lordship well knows that the first of obligations is to be just.

L. Vib. Well, well; but the estate you are so willing to resign will still, I hope, be yours.

Del. Nay, my lord.

L. Vib. Dubious as all things are, that is a subject on which I protest I do not believe I shall ever have any doubts. What say you, Lady Jane? (*Irony.*) But now I have my doubts again.

L. Jane. (*Eagerly.*) What doubts, my lord?

L. Vib. I doubt whether you understand me.

L. Jane. Would your lordship teach me to dissemble?

L. Vib. Um—I doubt whether that would be much for your good.

Del. I hope Lady Vibrate will not oppose our union?

Lady Vib. No, Mr Delaval. Your last generous action has charmed me; and Sir George—

Sir Geo. Has declined in your good opinion. But

you cannot think so ill of me as I do of myself; and if ever again I should recover my own self respect, I shall be indebted for it to this best of men, and to this most incomparable and affectionate of women!

Mar. My present joys are inexpressible!

Del. Which my impetuous indignation threatened for ever to destroy. (*Comes forward.*) How dangerous are extremes! Sometimes we doubt, and indecision is our bane: at others, hurried away by the sudden impulse of passion, our course is marked with misery. One man is too compliant: another too intractable. Yet happiness is the aim of all. Since, then, all are so liable to be misled, let gentle forbearance, indulgent thoughts, and a mild forgiving spirit, be ever held as the sacred duties of man to man. [*Exeunt omnes.*

SEDUCTION;

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

BY

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

VOL. IV.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR FREDERICK FASHION,	*Mr Palmer.*
LORD MORDEN,	*Mr Kemble.*
GENERAL BURLAND,	*Mr Aickin.*
LAPELLE,	*Mr Bates.*
BAILIFF,	*Mr Chaplin.*
MR WILMOT,	*Mr King.*
LADY MORDEN,	*Miss Farren.*
HARRIET,	*Mrs Wilson.*
EMILY,	*Mrs Brereton.*
MRS PINUP,	*Miss Tidswell.*
MRS MODELY,	*Miss Pope.*

The time within twelve hours. The Scene is the House of LORD MORDEN, *and does not change; and the Stage is never vacant, but at the end of an Act. The action is single.*

SEDUCTION.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A superb Drawing-Room in the House of LORD MORDEN, *with several Doors leading to other Apartments.*

LAPELLE, *from* LORD MORDEN'S *dressing-room, looking at his watch.*

Lap. Twenty minutes past ten!—a shameful time of the morning for a gentleman's gentleman to be disturbed.——My lord has lost his money, can't sleep himself, and won't suffer others to take their natural rest.

SCENE II.

LAPELLE, MRS PINUP, *from* LADY MORDEN'S *dressing-room.*

Mrs Pin. I declare, upon my honour, this is a most monstrous time of night for a lady's gentlewoman to

be kept up, dosing over a dull novel, or nodding in an anti-chamber and an arm-chair, while others are taking their pleasure, and losing their estates, among their friends.

Lap. Good morrow, Mrs Pinup.

Mrs Pin. Good morrow, Mr Lapelle! Good night, you mean.—I have not been in bed yet!

Lap. No!

Mrs Pin. That vile bed-side bell!—They'll wear me haggard before I am old! Knew I should not rest long, so threw myself down in my clothes; and, just as I was got into a sound sleep, tingle, tingle, tingle; up I must get, to dress my lady, who, for my part, I believe, never sleeps at all.

Lap. Why, yes; your fashionable folks are a kind of ghosts, that walk of nights, and greatly trouble the repose of valets and lady's maids—and late hours, like white paint, are excellent promoters of crack'd complexions.

Mrs Pin. I declare, upon my honour, I am as tired as—as——

Lap. A hackney coach-horse, on a rainy Sunday.

Mrs Pin. Yes—and as drowsy as—

Lap. An alderman at an oratorio.—Your lady had a deal of company at her rout—Was Sir Frederick Fashion there?

Mrs Pin. To be sure.

Lap. He is a prodigious favourite with your lady, I think.

Mrs Pin. Favourite!—There are strange doings in this world!—Staid I know not how long, after every body else was gone!

Lap. What, alone with your lady?

Mrs Pin. Alone with my lady.

Lap. Indeed!—Was Mrs Modely at the rout?

Mrs Pin. Yes—but don't ask me any questions; it's impossible I should say ten words more: I am talking in my sleep now.—When I get up in the

morning, that is, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I'll tell you all; so good night.

SCENE III.

Lap. A wonderful change in a short time!—Lady Morden, young, handsome, and full of spirits, was, not a month ago, reserved in her conduct, fond of her husband, contented with home, and, indeed, a miraculous kind of exception among wives of quality—Whereas, now, she has suddenly turned fantastical in dress, capricious in temper, free of speech, and, what we half-bred folks should call, light of carriage. She games with the women, coquettes with the men, and seems, in every respect, ambitious to become—a woman of fashion. As for my lord—why—he is a man of fashion.

SCENE IV.

GENERAL BURLAND, LAPELLE.

Gen. Is your lady up, Mr Lapelle?

Lap. Yes, sir—I believe she has never been in bed.

Gen. Who—what do you mean?

Lap. My lady had a rout last night.

Gen. A rout—and never in bed? Impossible!

Lap. Yes! but it's very true, sir.

Gen. Lady Morden! She whom, but a few weeks since, I left so singular, so eminent an example of simplicity and purity of manners!

Lap. Sir Frederick Fashion was here.

Gen. Sir Frederick Fashion!

Lap. He staid after every body else had retired.

Gen. What! alone with Lady Morden?

Lap. So her ladyship's woman, who is scarcely yet undressed, informed me.

Gen. (*After a pause of astonishment.*) Why, then, all hopes of goodness, in this world, are vanished!—Go—bid my daughter, my Emily, come to me.

Lap. She is not stirring, I fancy, sir.

Gen. But I fancy she is, sir; I am sure she is.—What, sir, she had not a rout, to keep her up all night!

Lap. She was of my lady's party, I believe, sir.

Gen. (*After a pause of great anxiety.*) Go—go—pray, go, and do as I bid you.

SCENE V.

Gen. What will this town, this world come to?—The only perfectly amiable, the only enchantingly virtuous woman I knew, fascinated at last, and sinking into the gulph of depravity!—She will drag down my Emily too!—No! I'll hide her in a forest, seclude her in a cave, rather than suffer her to be infected by the pestiferous breath of this contagious town.—But is she not already tainted?—Of my lady's party!—She that I left her with as a pattern, commanded her to observe, to study, to imitate in all things!

SCENE VI.

GENERAL BURLAND, LAPELLE.

Gen. Well, where is my daughter?

Lap. I have called her woman, and she will call Miss Emily.

Gen. I'll call her myself—and it shall be the most ungentle call she has long heard from me.

SCENE VII.

LAPELLE, HARRIET, *in the dress of a Croat.*

Lap. Who comes here? Some foreign sharper, I dare say—One of my lord's morning duns for last night's debts.

Har. (*With the brogue.*) Hark you, young man; may I be asking you where I will find my lord Morden?

Lap. He is not come down, sir.

Har. Oh, that, I suppose, is becase he is not up.

Lap. My lord told me he expected a gentleman or two would call—but he has had so many calls lately——

Har. That he is a little slow in answering?

Lap. Rather——Riches, regularity, and roast beef, will soon, I fear, take their leave of our house.

Har. Faidth, and that may viry will be; for they are all three become great vagabonds. Riches is turned Amirican pedlar, Regularity a Prussian grenadier, and as for Roast Beef, why, the Frinch are now so fond of good ould English fashions, that poor Roast Beef is transported alive to Paris.

Lap. My lord, I believe, is a little out of cash at present.

Har. Will, now, that is viry prudent of him to put it out; for, whin a man finds he can't keep his cash himself, he is viry right to lit odther people keep it for him.

Lap. Nay, then, I don't know a more carefifl gentleman.

Har. Careful? Why, sure, always whin a man of spirit begins to take care of his money, 'tis becase he has none.

Lap. Well, sir, if you will please to leave your card, his lordship, I suppose, will know who has called.

Har. Indeed and he won't.

Lap. How so, pray, sir?

Har. Faidth, for a viry good raison—He niver saw me in his life.

Lap. Who then shall I say?—

Har. And is it my name you would know?

Lap. If you please.

Har. Let me see—What the white divle is my name now?—Oh!—Char-les Phelim O'Fire-away; an Irishman by accident, a gentleman by policy, and a captain of Croats, in the Austrian sarvis, by design.—Do you understand that riddle now?

Lap. Not clearly.

Har. I did not intind you should.—What time can I see my lord?

Lap. Most likely about one.

Har. Will, then, give him this litter, and inform his lordship I will take the liberty of calling this afternoon, to bid him a good-morrow.

SCENE VIII.

LAPELLE, LORD MORDEN.

L. Mor. (*In his morning gown and slippers, and calling as he enters.*) Lapelle!

Lap. So! here he comes, already. (*Answering.*) My lord.

L. Mor. What time is it?

Lap. Eleven o'clock, my lord.

L. Mor. What a damn'd night have I passed!—Is my coffee ready?

Lap. I'll go and see, my lord.

SCENE IX.

L. Mor. (*Throws himself on the sofa.*) This headache!—No rest!—Oh for half an hour's sleep!—A cursed silly course of life mine!—But there is no accounting in the morning for the conduct of overnight.

SCENE X.

LORD MORDEN; LAPELLE *with Coffee.*

L. Mor. This is not half strong enough—get me some as strong as possible.—Any message? (*Rises.*)

Lap. This letter, my lord.

SCENE XI.

L. Mor. From Lady Westbrook, I see. (*Reads.*)—"Um—A young lady in disguise!—um—Will relate her own story!—um—um—Rely on your honour

to keep her secret, and serve her cause!——Would have addressed myself to Lady Morden, but for reasons which you shall know hereafter!"

SCENE XII.

LORD MORDEN; LAPELLE *with more Coffee.*

L. Mor. Who brought this letter?

Lap. An Irish gentleman, in a foreign dress.

L. Mor. A gentleman!

Lap. Said he would call about one, my lord.

L. Mor. Shew him into my room, and inform me the instant he comes.

Lap. General Burland is here.

L. Mor. (*Aside.*) General Burland! Zounds!

Lap. Came to town late last night, my lord.

L. Mor. Tell him I am come down.

SCENE XIII.

L. Mor. Must not let him see the present temper of my mind—My guardian once, he is determined never to think me of age—I need not his reproof to increase my present chagrin; my own follies and Lady Morden's unexpected, unaccountable reverse of conduct are sufficient—He will lay it all to me; and, perhaps, with reason!—Heigho! Here he comes—Really, one of these very prudent, plain-spoken friends is a very disagreeable person, in these our

moments of folly.——Well, I must assume a cheerfulness I don't feel, and ward off his wisdom with raillery.

SCENE XIV.

LORD MORDEN, GENERAL BURLAND.

Gen. Good morrow, my lord.

L. Mor. General, good morrow.

Gen. You seem scarcely awake.

L. Mor. (*Stretching.*) Slept ill—troubled with the night-mare.

Gen. Your troubles, I am afraid, are rapidly increasing.

L. Mor. How so, general?

Gen. Lady Morden had a rout last night!

L. Mor. Oh! and forgot to send you a card, I suppose——Is that my fault?

Gen. You are merry, my lord; but he who drinks poison, out of a frolic, will soon be glad to send for a physician, out of fear; and the chances are, the doctor will come too late.

L. Mor. Trope and figure!

Gen. My lord! My lord! This levity is unseasonable: blushes and shame would better become you.

L. Mor. Pff! They are out of fashion.

Gen. Yes, you leave your friends to blush for your faults.

L. Mor. My friends are very good; nay, indeed, generous; for were they but to spare a single blush for each of their own faults, they would have none to bestow on mine.

Gen. Fie! The mirth of a madman is sport only

to boys——I was your guardian; I wished to prove myself your friend. 'Twas I first discovered that then angelic woman, who is, now, Lady Morden; I was the cause of her union with you; and I am, therefore, accountable to myself, to her, and to society, for her conduct.

L. Mor. That is, you are a kind of second-hand sponsor——godfather-in-law, as it were.

Gen. Very well, sir! proceed! despise reproof! ridicule advice!

L. Mor. Nay, good doctor, you really wrong me; 'tis not the advice, but the physic, I hate——At least, I hate the form under which it is administered ——But, pray, tell me; when last you saw Lady Morden, did you perceive any symptoms of that degeneracy in her ladyship you now complain so loudly of?

Gen. None! I thought it impossible!

L. Mor. And is it not rather extraordinary, then, that my example should, so suddenly, subdue what, within this month, seemed so invulnerable?

Gen. (*Great surprise and energy.*) It is extraordinary, my lord! most extraordinary! but not less true; and had you any sense of your duty to yourself, your family, or society, the truth of it would make you tremble!

L. Mor. See how differently different people understand things! My acquaintance are, every day, wishing me joy of her ladyship's reformation, and telling me how surprisingly she has retrieved her character in the world.

Gen. (*Sarcastically.*) And Sir Frederick Fashion, no doubt, among the rest.

L. Mor. (*Endeavouring to conceal his feelings.*) Hem!—yes,—yes. He is one of our very first men, you know; and he is quite in raptures with her—swears she was born to lead and outshine us all.

Gen. (*With continued irony.*) The approbation of so great an adept must give you vast pleasure!

L. Mor. Hem!—a—infinite!——Not but this sudden change has rather surprised me.

Gen. How so?

L. Mor. Just as you left town, her ladyship's melancholy seemed increasing—wandering over the house like a perturbed spirit, as the play says, mournfully clanking her chains, and frightening the gentle smiles and pleasures from her, she seemed to waylay me, and, with moving look and melting eye intreat compassion, till, egad, I really at last began to pity her.

Gen. You did!

L. Mor. Yes—But, suddenly forsaking the *penseroso*, she broke in upon me one morning, and with an air of levity and good humour, and a small tincture of reproach, then and there read me a very pretty, wife-like remonstrance.

Gen. To which you listened with a truly picktooth insensibility.

L. Mor. Yes—You know my way.

Gen. And what was the subject of her discourse?

L. Mor. Why, chapter the first was a recapitulation of my agreeable follies, and her own perverse virtues.—She was no partaker in my pleasures—I had forgot every endearment—She was left to dine, sup, and sleep by herself—I dined, supped, and slept, nobody knew where—She more recluse than the abbess of a convent: I more uncertain than the price of stocks, or the place of prime minister.

Gen. (*With earnest concern.*) And what did you say to this?

L. Mor. (*Aside.*) I must face it out. (*Aloud.*) Say? What could I say to such a simple woman?

Gen. You did not attempt to deny the charge then?

L. Mor. What should I deny? 'Twas every syllable true, and every syllable in my praise.

Gen. (*Sighs.*) Humph!—Then you do not think the sweets of affection ought sometimes to alleviate the bitterness of neglect.

L. Mor. Sweets! pshaw! they are too cloying to the stomach, and ought to be taken sparingly.——I am fond of sweet music, but too much of it sets me to sleep.——Besides, a wife, like a barrel organ, can only play one set of tunes.

Gen. (*Sighs.*) Well, sir, but the conclusion?

L. Mor. A very unexpected one, I assure you.—I misunderstood this for a declaration of war, and, with a smile, was very obligingly about to entreat her ladyship would hatch her melancholy into mischief her own way, when, turning short upon me, she curtsied, seemed abashed, began to apologize, applaud my conduct, ridicule the silliness of her own, and promised to become as fashionable a lady as I, or any lord in Christendom could wish.

Gen. Your increase of happiness is then prodigious!

L. Mor. Hem!—a—unspeakable.——Lady Morden, I own, was certainly a kind of——demi-angel, though my wife——but then her—her goodness seemed to throw one at such a distance—so much in the back ground, that there was only one figure noticed in the picture!

Gen. 'Tis well, sir, you are so perfectly satisfied.

L. Mor. Nay, general, I will own I have often felt a kind of inclination, a sort of wish, as it were, to become very prudent and wise, and—and all that—but, really, one has so much to do, that one does not know where to begin.—Besides, you very good kind of people, you—upon my honour, you are, in many respects, the most queer, precise, particular, species of beings, and have such strange notions!—Instead of taking one's pleasure, and doing just what

one likes best, which, you know, is so natural, one must live for the good of one's country, love one's wife and children, pay tradesmen, look over accounts, reward merit, and a thousand other of the—the most ridiculous whims——and what nobody, absolutely, nobody does.

Gen. Intolerable profligacy!—I have listened to you, my lord, with grief, vexation, astonishment, and pity!—Your mind is degraded, and the more dangerously so, because you believe your worst vices to be your greatest merits! You have had honour, happiness, and pleasure, of the most perfect kind, within your power, and you have rejected them, to clasp their shadows! To merit pity by misconduct is humiliating; but by misconduct to incur contempt, is, to a manly spirit, insupportable; and the latter will, I fear, be suddenly your lordship's fate. Did not the remembrance of your noble father affect me, I should look upon your approaching punishment with apathy, because you wilfully have plunged to perdition; but for your lady, if I cannot retrieve, if I cannot save her, I shall mourn indeed!

SCENE XV.

L. Mor. Faith, this good general is, like a cuckoo, always in a tune. (*Sighs.*) He has reason! I have laboured to laugh at my own follies; but the farce is over, the forced jest forgotten, and the sorceress Recollection conjures up the ugly phantom Disgust!—Why, what a child am I!—Oh! Lady Morden—pshaw!—absurd!—I will not make myself the butt and by-word of my acquaintance—I—I—I will laugh—ha, ha, ha!—laugh at my lady's gallantries.—I jealous!—I!—that have daily made jealousy a standing jest;

the criterion of an ill-bred, vulgar mind!—No, no, no. (*Sees* LADY MORDEN *and* SIR FREDERICK FASHION *coming, and is seized with a suspicious anxiety, which he endeavours to conceal.*)

SCENE XVI.

LORD MORDEN, LADY MORDEN, *in an undress*, SIR FREDERICK FASHION.

Lady Mor. (*Entering.*) No, no, Sir Frederick; you are partial.

Sir Fred. Not in the least, madam.

Lady Mor. Yes, you are—good morrow to your lordship—yes, you are.—I feel I still retain a leaven of former silly prejudices; but a little collision among you people of superior fashion will soon wear these asperities smooth, and bring them to bear a proper polish.

Sir Fred. Ah! madam, you have a leaven of something celestial, which we *inferior* people wonder at, but cannot imitate!

L. Mor. (*Aside.*) So!

Lady Mor. (*Taps* SIR FREDERICK *with her fan.*) Fie! flatterer!—but you are always saying civil things, and that, I fancy, makes you so agreeable.

Sir Fred. (*Serious and ardent.*) No, Lady Morden; you wrong me—my tongue is forced to give utterance to the effusions of my heart—By Heaven, you are an angel! and I am, involuntarily, obliged to repeat, and repeat, and repeat, that you are an angel!—You must not be angry with me, for I cannot help it.

Lady Mor. No, no—angry! no—Though I really believe I do improve—don't I, my lord?

L. Mor. Certainly, madam, certainly!

Lady Mor. Yes—I have discovered that one of my most capital errors, formerly, was being too sensible of my own defects.—I find that to wear on one's countenance an open and avowed consciousness that one possesses every grace and perfection, is the grand secret of really possessing them; or, at least, of persuading the world one really does, which is the same thing.

Sir Fred. Your ladyship is very right; nothing can put a face of real fashion out of countenance: the placid features are all fixed.

Lady Mor. Oh, immoveable!—Like the owner's names, cut in brass, and nailed to their doors.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! Charming!

Lady Mor. Do but observe one of our well-bred beaus, at a public assembly, and you will see him enter, plant himself in a spot, elevate his eye-brows, fix his eyes, half open his mouth, and stand like an automaton, with its head turning on a pivot. (*Mimicks the manner.*)

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! Charming! Charming!

L. Mor. (*Smiling.*) But don't you think this a *little* tending to the ridiculous, madam?

Lady Mor. Oh dear, no!—Nothing can be ridiculous that's fashionable.

Sir Fred. Oh, no, impossible!

Lady Mor. Formerly, I should have blushed if stared at; but now, I find, the only way is to stare again—without looking—that is, without betraying the least indication of knowing whether one is looking towards the man or the wall—thus.

L. Mor. (*With forced pleasantry.*) Ha, ha, ha! Your ladyship is very right: modesty—modesty is an obsolete bugbear.

Lady Mor. Yes, and, like the—the ghost in the tragedy, has been stared out of doors.

Sir Fred. Oh, the very quakers despise it at present.

Lady Mor. Yes—'tis a shabby fellow, whose acquaintance every body wishes to drop.—To be sure, I was a most absurd creature: was not I, my lord?

L. Mor. I—upon my honour, madam—I—you—no—no—not absurd—no.

Lady Mor. Oh fie—not absurd—why, do you know, Sir Frederick—ha! ha! ha!—I—ha! ha! ha! I was downright in love with his lordship.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! in love with his lordship?

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha! upon my honour, 'tis true!—is it not, my lord?

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha!—ye—ye—yes—madam, yes.

Lady Mor. Thought him the most charming man in—in—in the whole world!

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! Is that possible?

Lady Mor. Why, it—it is scarcely credible!—But—but such is the fact—Nay! I doated on him—and continually reproached myself for wanting power and attractions to obtain my lord's affection!—For I never blamed him—Ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha!—I used to sit whole nights, while my lord was out, watching and weeping; and whole days studying which way I could regain his love!

Sir Fred. Regain, Lady Morden!—Why, was his *lordship* ever so unfashionable as—as—

Lady Mor. As to love his wife—Why, yes, really—I—I do believe he was so singular, for—for a whole fortnight.

Sir Fred. Why ha, ha, ha! Why, were you, Lord Morden?

L. Mor. (*Forcing a laugh.*) Ha, ha, ha!—I—I—(*With a little spleen.*) I don't know, sir, what I was.

Lady Mor. Nay, don't be out of countenance, my lord! You hear I have the justice to relate my own foibles, as well as your lordship's—and mine—mine were infinitely the greatest.—It is exceedingly strange, but so—fascinated—was I, that—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha!—(*Suddenly becoming very serious*)

—I am verily persuaded I could have died with pleasure, to have insured his affection.

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha!—(*Aside, and turning away.*) I cannot bear it.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! These things are unaccountable.

Lady Mor. (*Resuming her levity.*) Ay, one wonders how one could be so weak!—Oh, Sir Frederick! I am going to Christie's. There is a painting I have a mind to purchase. They tell me 'tis very fine.

Sir Fred. What is the story, madam?

Lady Mor. The metamorphosis of Actæon.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! A fashionable subject.

Lady Mor. Yes—that—that—that is the very reason I wish to have it.—Poor Actæon is taken at the precise moment when the—the change is taking place.

Sir Fred. In his forehead?

Lady Mor. Yes, I am going down there now; will you go with me, Sir Frederick?

Sir Fred. With pleasure, madam—Ha, ha, ha! Poor Actæon!

Lady Mor. Ay, poor Actæon!—Adieu, my lord.

SCENE XVII.

L. Mor. Madam! (*Following, stops short.*) 'Sdeath! what am I about? Shall I at last sink into one of the vulgar, and become jealous?—Wretched about a —Oh, no—Actæon! (*Striking his forehead.*) Sure all men are idiots, and never know the value of that most inestimable jewel, a lovely and a loyal wife, till in danger of having it purloined. (LORD MORDEN *retires into his dressing-room.*)

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

LAPELLE, (*coming from the door of the anti-chamber, as if he had been listening.*)

So Mr Irishman, by accident!—a lady, in disguise! That's the riddle, is it?—But hush!

SCENE II.

LORD MORDEN, *dressed*, HARRIET, (*from the anti-chamber.*)

L. Mor. (*To* LAPELLE.) Leave the room—I am sorry we were disturbed: your story, madam, has interested me deeply: though too reprehensible for the irregularities of my own conduct, I cannot but condemn the licentious libertinism of this Sir Frederick—Indeed, I—I have reason, perhaps, to dread it.

Har. A man of honour among men, the ruin of woman he thinks as necessary to his fame as to his pleasure; and, like too many others of your cruel sex, holds it no crime to make war upon those who cannot defend themselves.

L. Mor. But what do you propose by this disguise, madam?

Har. There is a contract, which I, indeed, refused, but which he forced upon me, to demonstrate, as he said, the purity of his intentions, wherein he bound himself, in a penalty of ten thousand pounds, to marry me within a month: for, in his fictitious raptures, he protested no sum, no proofs, could sufficiently express the ardour and sanctity of his affection.

L. Mor. And have you this contract?

Har. Oh, no! The day preceding that on which it was my good fortune to discover his real designs, he asked to see, and artfully exchanged it for a counterfeit copy.

L. Mor. This contract you wish to regain?

Har. If possible, or some other unequivocal means of detection.

L. Mor. And force him to marry you?

Har. Oh, no—To own the truth, I have a generous and a constant lover, who, perhaps, has been a little ill used.

L. Mor. As most generous and constant lovers are.

Har. 'Tis too true.—To avenge him, and humble the pride of one who thinks himself too cunning for our whole sex, is my determination.

L. Mor. Well, madam, ours is a common cause—But as we have both been imprudent, and invited misfortune, we must both endeavour to conceal our true feelings, mask our suspicions, and—Hush! here he comes; and with him a lady, whose principles are as free as his own, but who has had the art so well to conceal her intrigues, and preserve appearances, that she is every where received in society.—I will introduce you, in your assumed character.

Har. Not now: let us withdraw—when he is alone.

The fewer eyes are on me, the less liable I shall be to a discovery.

(LORD MORDEN *and* HARRIET *return to the anti-chamber, just as* MRS MODELY *and* SIR FREDERICK *appear.*)

SCENE III.

MRS MODELY *and* SIR FREDERICK.

Mrs Mod. Really, Sir Frederick, there is no accounting for the strangeness of your present taste!—I pity you!—I foresee the downfal of your reputation!—What, you! who have vanquished so many elegant coquettes, and driven so many happy lovers mad; you! who were the very soul of our first societies, and whose presence made palpitate the hearts of belles and beaux; the first with hope and delight, the latter with fear and envy; you! sighing at the feet of a prude, and become the rival of a husband!

Sir Fred. (*Laughing.*) Deplorable!

Mrs Mod. Have not you for this month past buried yourself in Lady Morden's sober society, and dosed over crown whist with her night after night?—Nay, have not you attended her even to church, and, there, with a twang, joined the amen chorus of charity-children, paupers, and parish clerks; sitting with your face drawn as long as its shadow at sunset, and a look as demure and dismal—

Sir Fred. As poor Doctor Faustus, waiting for the devil to come and fetch him—Ha, ha, ha!—Granted.

Mrs Mod. And what do you think has been said of you, meanwhile, in the polite circles you have abandoned?—Your very best friends have been the very first to condemn you.

Sir Fred. That's natural—When we are guilty of any folly, our very best friends are always the very first to condemn us, to shew they neither advise nor countenance us.

Mrs Mod. I thought the gay, young beauty, besieged by pleasures, surrounded by flatteries, who believes herself the goddess she is painted, to fix her wandering fancy, to humble and bring her to a sense of frailty, or to supplant the happy, the adored lover, while yet the breath is warm that vows eternal constancy; these, I imagined, were the only achievements worthy Sir Frederick Fashion!

Sir Fred. These have their eclat. But to initiate a youthful, beauteous wife, who, from her childhood, has been accustomed to say her prayers, believe in virtue, and rank conjugal infidelity among the most heinous of the seven deadly sins; to teach her to doubt, fear, wish, tremble, and venture; to be a witness afterward of her repentance, her tears involuntarily falling, her eyes motionless, her form fixed, and the severe saint transformed to a statue of weeping sin; to read her fall in the public papers; be praised, reproached, admired, and curs'd in every family in England; in short, to be for ever immortalized in the annals of gallantry, and the hero of the tea-table for a whole month, for this will be no common vulgar wonder, this were glory equal to my ambition! And this glory I am determined to acquire; nay, it is already within my grasp.—This day, or, rather, this night, this very blessed, ecstatic night, shall I gain the greatest of all my victories!

Mrs Mod. Insulting!

Sir Fred. Nay, my dear Mrs Modely, you know my enthusiasm, and must not take exceptions—Nor can I, surely, be blamed. Lady Morden is a concealed hortle of native sweets, that delights the senses; while the made-up beauties we commonly meet, like artificial flowers, are all shew, and no fragrance.

Mrs Mod. Raptures!

Sir Fred. Inferior to her, in form and perfection as the Venus of a Dutch image-hawker to the genuine Grecian antique!

Mrs Mod. It matters not wasting your rhetoric on this topic; for I will not give my consent to your pursuing this affair any further, Sir Frederick.

Sir Fred. You will not?

Mrs Mod. I will not.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! Don't provoke me, my dear Mrs Modely; don't provoke me.

Mrs Mod. Nay, no threatening.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!—Well—To arms then—War is the word.

Mrs Mod. The choice remains with you.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Mod. Lady Morden is my relation; and though I despise prudery, and know the world—

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) That you do, indeed!

Mrs Mod. Yet—you can hardly suppose I will silently acquiesce in her ruin!

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! You—you forget yourself, dear madam—These qualms would do vastly well in some places, but to me—

Mrs Mod. And why not to you, sir?—Though I do allow myself a little liberty of conscience—

Sir Fred. Not a little. (*Aside.*)

Mrs Mod. And though you—you—know I do, must I—In short, I have another favourite project, which I am determined not to give up.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) Oh ho! But it will be best to avoid a rupture.—(*Aloud.*) May I ask what this favourite project may be?

Mrs Mod. You know the public affront General Burland gave me last winter, and you cannot suppose I have forgotten it.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) No; I know you better.—(*Aloud.*) Oh! the general is an eccentric mortal,

licensed to say any thing; and, instead of being listened to, is laughed at.

Mrs Mod. Yes; but I am determined he shall be punished.

Sir Fred. Which way?

Mrs Mod. His daughter Emily is a pretty, simple girl—I mean, untutored in the world.

Sir Fred. (*Conceiving her design.*) True!

Mrs Mod. To see her married to a man of fashion would, at least, break his heart.

Sir Fred. (*Laughs.*) Infallibly!

Mrs Mod. Your fortune, I believe, Sir Frederick, like your family seat, begins to want repairs; and she is a rich heiress, with twenty thousand pounds at her own disposal, beside the general's estate, which must be hers—Why do you laugh so?

Sir Fred. Oh! the delights of anticipation!

Mrs Mod. An—an—anticipation!

Sir Fred. (*Still laughing.*) It is a part of my plan to carry her off; I mean, to let her carry me off, this very night.

Mrs Mod. Who? Emily?

Sir Fred. Emily.

Mrs Mod. To-night!

Sir Fred. This active, this important, this blissful night!

Mrs Mod. Lend me your eau de luce, you divle!

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!—This surprise from you, Mrs Modely, is the supreme of panegyric.

Mrs Mod. And have you made any advances to Emily?

Sir Fred. Yes, yes—Ha, ha, ha!—I made advances to her, and she made advances to me—The conquest was too easy—Were it not for the circumstance of the elopement, which will give the sauce a flavour the food wants, it would scarcely invite my appetite.

Mrs Mod. But Lady Morden—

Sir Fred. Is mine, whenever I please to make my

final attack. I am no bad orator in general; but in company with her I seem inspired—am absolutely astonished at my own eloquence!—Nay, I have several times spoken with such energy, enthusiasm, and momentary conviction, in praise of virtue, that I have actually been in imminent danger of making a convert of myself!

Mrs Mod. In praise of virtue?

Sir Fred. In praise of virtue. There is no making one of these virtuous visionaries rational, but by flattering their bigotry, and pretending to adore their idol; by pursuing which method, I have inured her to, and made her as familiar with what is prudishly called vice and vicious sentiments, as she is with her own thoughts.

Mrs Mod. Yes, yes, vile rake: but remember I'll have no concern in this affair!—I—

Sir Fred. Oh, poh! Ay, ay, that is understood—You wink—and know nothing of the matter.

Mrs Mod. Nay, but I here publicly protest against your proceedings.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) And will privately do your utmost to promote them.

Mrs Mod. I exclaim against such licentiousness!

Sir Fred. I know you do—But if you are thus tender of her ladyship's reputation, you will feel no repugnance at assisting me to irritate his lordship's sensibility.

Mrs Mod. What do you mean?

Sir Fred. To confess the truth, I am a little piqued at Lord Morden's want of feeling—I wish I could make him jealous.

Mrs Mod. Jealous! Fie! He is too well bred.

Sir Fred. That's unfortunate.—The antics of a jealous husband add highly to the enjoyment, as well as the reputation of an amour. The poor man is so injured, so enraged, so distressed, so industrious to publish his calamity, and is so sincerely pitied and laugh-

ed at—must positively rouse my lord to a sense of his misfortune, or it will want poignancy—A turtle feast without French wines!

Mrs Mod. Well, should I find any opportunity of aiding you—

Sir Fred. Ay, ay; I have no doubt of your zeal in the cause.

Mrs Mod. Nay, but don't mistake me—I only mean as far as teazing his lordship is concerned.

Sir Fred. Oh! Certainly—certainly.

Mrs Mod. If his lordship had any real cause for jealousy, I should, for Lady Morden's sake, be the—the—the—the—the most miserable creature upon earth.

Sir Fred. To be sure.

Mrs Mod. But you seem mighty secure of your conquest.

Sir Fred. I am no novice: I can tell when a woman's time is come.—Besides, her ladyship has granted me a rendezvous.

Mrs Mod. When?

Sir Fred. Why, this very evening, to be sure.

Mrs Mod. Where?

Sir Fred. Here, in this very house.

Mrs Mod. Since you are so very certain, how came you not to take advantage of being alone with her after the rout?

Sir Fred. I did; that is, should have done, had we not been interrupted.

Mrs Mod. By whom?

Sir Fred. A new footman—an odd kind of—Oh! here the very fellow comes.

SCENE IV.

MRS MODELY, SIR FREDERICK, GABRIEL, *loitering and leering.*

Mrs Mod. What does the rude lout peer at?

Sir Fred. Country curiosity.

Gab. (*Attempting to go once or twice, then pausing, and turning back.*) Did—did—did your ladyship's honour call?

Mrs Mod. No.

Gab. (*Again going and turning.*) I—I thought, mayhap, you wanted my lord.

Mrs Mod. What should I want your lord for, think you, friend?

Gab. Nay, marry, that's more nur I can tell.

Sir Fred. What is your name?

Gab. Gabriel, an't please you.—In my last place, they used to call me the Sly Simpleton.

Mrs Mod. And who did you live with last?

Gab. Why, you an heard of my lady's brother, the rich nabob, that be just come over fro' th' Eastern Indies.

Sir Fred. Mr Wilmot?

Gab. Ees.—I do come fro' his estate, out o' Staffordshire.

Sir Fred. You are part of the live stock?

Gab. Anon!

Mrs Mod. Were you in his service?

Gab. (*Hesitates.*) N—E—Ees.

Mrs Mod. How long?

Gab. Better nur a week.

Sir Fred. What sort of a man is he?

Gab. Humph!—A be well enough, when a's plea-

sed——tho' I canno' say as I do like him much for a measter.

Mrs Mod. Why so?

Gab. Becase a'l neither let a servant tell lies nur take money.

Sir Fred. Indeed!

Gab. No—A' wonnot—whereof, here, I find I canno' please my lady, if I donna tell lies; and, I am sure, I canno' please myself, if I donna take money.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Mod. Ha, ha, ha! So he did not suit you?

Gab. No.—A's too high flown, as 'twere, in's notions——

Sir Fred. Which way?

Gab. A makes a great case o' what a calls friendship, and honour, and honesty, and such like; and, you know, if a poor sarvant gis head to that there sort o' stuff, a's not likely to get rich.

Mrs Mod. Upon my word!

Sir Fred. So Mr Wilmot's head is full of such nonsense, is it?

Gab. Oh! a's brimful of such nonsense—and so were I while I lived wi' he; which wur the reason, as I do suppose, that they called me a simpleton; but I am not so simple as folk think me.

Sir Fred. (*Aside to* Mrs Modely.) My dear Mrs Modely, leave me for a moment with this fellow.—You'll be upon the watch, to throw in any hints or aids you happen to see necessary and à propos?

Mrs Mod. Yes, yes—that is, for Emily and the elopement; but be cautious; a defeat would turn the tables upon us, and make us the jest of the whole town, friends and enemies.

Sir Fred. How can you fear it?

Mrs Mod. Nay, I do not: I know my sex, and I know you.

SCENE V.

SIR FREDERICK, GABRIEL.

Sir Fred. Gabriel is your name, you say?

Gab. Ees.

Sir Fred. You seem a sharp kind of fellow, and one that understands his own interest.

Gab. Ees, I understand my own interest.

Sir Fred. Are you, if occasion should offer, willing to do me a piece of service?

Gab. Humph! What will you gi' me?

Sir Fred. I see you are a sensible fellow, and come to the point at once.

Gab. Ees; I love to come to the point.

Sir Fred. And you would not betray me to any body?

Gab. Why—not unless somebody were to pay me better.

Sir Fred. Upon my honour, thou art the honestest rogue I ever met with.

Gab. Ees, that I be.

Sir Fred. Here, here is money for thee; and observe, as thou seemest perfectly to understand a bargain, thou shalt have more in proportion to thy fidelity and capacity: and moreover, canst thou read and write?

Gab. Ees.

Sir Fred. Well, then, be faithful, and I will get thee a place in the excise. And now, observe—I—I have a—very great respect—and friendship for your lady.

Gab. Ees, ees; as we sen i' th' country, you have more nur a month's mind to her.

Sir Fred. How, sirrah! Dare you suppose I have—

Gab. Nay, now, belike *you* think me a simpleton too! Your great folk supposen a sarvant has neither ears nor eyes; but, Lord! they are mistaken!—Eeod, their ears are often plaguy long. What, mun, I wur no' sa fast asleep as you thought me i' the passage this morning.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) The rascal!

Gab. Belike, because I be a country lad, you reckon I should think it strange, like, that one gentleman should teak a liking to another gentleman's wife; but, Lord, I know well enough that's nought here—I ha' learned a little o' what's what.

Sir Fred. Nay, friend Gabriel, I am more and more convinced thou art a clever acute fellow.

Gab. Lord, mun, your worship need no' be so shy like. You do know you ha' promised me a place—an places that are no bought one way, mun be bought another.

Sir Fred. Well said, friend Gabriel.

Gab. An as for keeping o' family secrets, donno' you fear me; becase, why, I do find they be a sarvant's best parkizites—For an it wur na for family secrets, how should so many poor country Johns so very soon become gentlemen?

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) This fellow's thoughts run all in one channel: his ruling passion is money; the love of that sharpens his intellects, and opens his eyes and ears.——Well, Gabriel, you shall find me generous as a prince, provided——Here's somebody coming—go into the next room: I'll speak with you presently.

Gab. Ees; but I do hope your honour' worship wunna forget the place, like.

Sir Fred. Never fear.

[GABRIEL *goes into* LADY MORDEN'S *dressing-room.*

SCENE VI.

SIR FREDERICK, EMILY.

Sir Fred. My angel! my life!

Em. Hush! my papa is coming, and wants to take me away with him home.

Sir Fred. Away!

Em. Yes—hush—take no notice

SCENE VII.

GENERAL BURLAND, SIR FREDERICK, EMILY.

Gen. Come, Emily, are you ready?

Em. I am always ready and happy to obey my dear papa; but surely, sir, you will not let me leave Lady Morden without so much as bidding her adieu?

Gen. I will write a card of thanks to her ladyship, with your respects, and as many compliments as you please.

Em. Nay, but, dear sir, consider, it will seem too abrupt. Lady Morden is so good, so kind, I would not give her a moment's pain for the world. Besides, I have so many obligations to her ladyship.

Gen. I begin to be afraid, child, lest you should have too many obligations to her ladyship.

Em. Let me only stay to-night, and to-morrow morning I will go with all my heart, and as early as you please, if you desire me.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) I protest she is bantering him! Oh! the charming malicious little angel. (*Aloud.*)

Ay, general, let Emily stay to-night; I will answer for her: she will go to-morrow morning, as soon as you please, if you desire her.

Gen. You will answer for her!

Sir Fred. Yes—won't you permit me, Emily?

Em. (*Curtsies.*) My dear papa knows I never attempt to break my word.

Gen. Yes, my child, I do know you have hitherto been unspotted and pure as the morn-blown lily; and my anxiety that you should remain so makes me thus desirous of your quitting this house. When I brought you here, these doors did not so easily fly open at the approach of such fine, such accomplished gentlemen as Sir Frederick Fashion.

Sir Fred. (*With vast pleasure.*) By Heavens! he anticipates his misfortunes! (*Aside.*)

Em. (*Takes the general's hand.*) Do, my dear papa, consent only for to-day; I don't ask any longer.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) I could hug the charming hypocrite.

Gen. Well, well, Emmy, you know I never deny you any thing; for indeed you never yet asked any thing that could give the most anxious and affectionate father a moment's pain.

Em. (*Kisses his hand.*) I thank you, dear, dear sir: you have made me happy.

Sir Fred. By my life, I shall find this a much more agreeable affair than I hoped!—Yes, general, you—you are a very good papa.

Gen. You think so?

Sir Fred. Yes, I do, upon my soul.

Gen. Then I am what you, I am afraid, will never be.

SCENE VIII.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! He does not suspect we are so soon to be so nearly related. Ha, ha, ha! I should like to be present when he first hears the news. He—he will foam and bounce like a cork from a bottle of champaigne.

SCENE IX.

LORD MORDEN, *from the anti-chamber.*

L. Mor. Well, Sir Frederick, is her ladyship returned?

Sir Fred. Yes; she is dressing for dinner. She bought the Actæon.

L. Mor. She did?

Sir Fred. Oh yes.—She is a charming woman!—The eyes of the whole room were upon her. There were some smart things said. One observed a likeness between me and Actæon; another thought it bore a far greater resemblance to your lordship.

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha! About the head, no doubt?

Sir Fred. For my part, I said, I thought the likeness was very capable of being improved.

L. Mor. You were very kind.

Sir Fred. Oh, pray have you heard that Sir Peter Pry is going to sue for a bill of divorce?

L. Mor. No.

Sir Fred. 'Tis very true. I should not have suspected Sir Peter of such vulgar revenge; but I find

our married men of fashion are far less liberal in their sentiments than the ladies.

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Yes; they often want a woman's philosophy in these matters.

Sir Fred. Yes, they are wasps, that fly and feed wherever they can find honey, but retain a sting for any marauder that shall approach their nests.

L. Mor. Somewhat selfish, I own.

Sir Fred. Much more liable to be jealous than the women; and jealousy, your lordship knows, is the most ridiculous, ill-bred, contemptible thing in nature!

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes—ha, ha, ha!—perfectly despicable.

Sir Fred. Oh, nothing so laughable as the vagaries of a jealous husband: no creature suffers so much, or is pitied so little.

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Ay, the thefts of love are applauded, not punished.

Sir Fred. Yes, and the poor robb'd husband, watchman-like, twirls his rattle, alarms the neighbourhood, and collects assistants, who never fail to aid the thief, and laugh at him and his loss.

L. Mor. Ye—ye—yes. Ha, ha, ha!—A husband is a very strange, ignominious animal.

Sir Fred. A jealous husband!

L. Mor. A paltry, mechanical——

Sir Fred. Without an idea of life or manners!

L. Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Very true. But come with me; there's a young gentleman in the anti-chamber, of a good family, who wishes to be introduced to you—A very pretty fellow; has an ambition to do something which shall give him eclat, and is therefore desirous of being known to us men of the world.

Sir Fred. Well, I am yours for a few minutes; but I must attend Lady Morden at her toilette presently.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

GENERAL BURLAND, LORD MORDEN, *meeting:* GABRIEL *introduces* GENERAL BURLAND.

Gen. Well, my lord, is Lady Morden to be seen?

Gab. Oh ees, your worship, hur will be, anon; for yonder is Sir Frederick, helping the maid to dress her ladyship.

Gen. Helping to dress her ladyship!

Gab. Ees. They sent me for some milk of roses, here; (*Shewing the phial;*) and, would you believe it, I wur sich an oaf, I had never heard before that roses gave milk.

Gen. Ah! you are some half-taught country booby.

Gab. Why, so I do find; for in the country the folk do only clear-starch their aprons and ruffles, but here, eood, they clear-starch their faces.

Gen. Well, go carry in your milk, and inform her ladyship I am waiting her leisure.—(*Laughing within.*)

Gab. Eood, here they all come, your honour, and rare and merry they be. But your Londoneers do lead a rare ranting life!

SCENE II.

GENERAL BURLAND, LORD MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK, LADY MORDEN, MRS MODELY—*The three last from* LADY MORDEN'S *dressing-room, laughing.*

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha!—Oh! you whimsical toad you! Ha, ha, ha! You have half killed me!—I am glad to see you in town, general. We have been drawing the characters of our acquaintance; and Mrs Modely and Sir Frederick Fashion have been so droll and so satirical!

Gen. Ah, no doubt.

Lady Mor. I could not have thought there was so much satisfaction in remembering the failings of one's friends.

Mrs Mod. Oh, it makes one so cheerful!

Sir Fred. And keeps one so charmingly in countenance!

Gen. (*Aside.*) Which you stand in very great need of.

Sir Fred. I assure your ladyship you have an exquisite turn for satire: you cut with excessive keenness, and yet with a dexterity that makes the very patient tingle with pleasure.

Lady Mor. You are partial: a little more experience will make these things quite familiar, but habit only can give one perfect ease.

Sir Fred. Oh, habit!—habit is a wonderful thing! Have you heard the anecdote of the Newmarket jockey?

Lady Mor. No; what is it?

Sir Fred. Why, a jockey, having had a bad run at the last October meeting, was willing to correct the

errors of Fortune by turning his lead to gold. Accordingly, on Epping Forest he stopped Major Warboys, and bade him deliver; to which the major, being one of those singular officers who think it some disgrace to be robb'd, replied by firing his pistol.—The ball happened to be fatal. The horse set off; and, to shew the effect of habit, the body of the jockey kept its seat as far as the stable door, and there deliberately tumbled off; nay, some go so far as to assert, it was seen to rise in the stirrups; but that, I believe, wants confirmation.

L. Mor. } Ha, ha, ha!
Mrs Mod. }

Lady Mor. Pshaw! you tragi-comic wretch!

L. Mor. I think you had not much company last night.

Lady Mor. Your lordship was so well bred, and made your visit so short, else you would have found a great deal.

Mrs Mod. Oh yes, they poured in from all quarters.

Sir Fred. Sir Nathan Neaptide, the yellow admiral came.

L. Mor. An agreeable guest!

Mrs Mod. Oh, rude as his own boatswain!

Sir Fred. Would teach a starling blasphemy, rather than want good conversation.

Lady Mor. He attempts satire.

L. Mor. But utters abuse.

Mrs Mod. That makes him so much respected.

Lady Mor. Yes; like a chimney-sweeper in a crowd, he makes his way by being dirty.

Sir Fred. I protest your ladyship is prodigiously brilliant to-day.

Lady Mor. No, no; though I am a vast admirer of wit. A person of wit has one very peculiar and enviable advantage.

L. Mor. What is that, madam?

Lady Mor. Long life.

L. Mor. Long life!

Lady Mor. Yes; a wit has more ideas, consequently lives longer in one hour than a fool in seven years.

Sir Fred. For which reason your ladyship is already three times the age of Old Parr.

Lady Mor. Dear Sir Frederick, that is so gallant.

Mrs Mod. And so new.

Gen. Why, yes; this is the first time I ever heard a lady told she was old, and receive it as a compliment!

L. Mor. But your visitors—who had you next?

Mrs Mod. There was Sir Jeremy Still-life.

Lady Mor. (*Mimics.*) And his bouquet. He primmed himself up in one corner, and seemed to think that, like the image of a saint on a holy-day, he was powdered and painted on purpose to be adored.

Mrs Mod. He was not singular in that.

Lady Mor. Oh no: there was a whole row of them that, like jars and mandarins on a mantle-piece, look'd vastly ornamental, and served charmingly to fill up vacancies.

Gen. Every trifle has its use.

Mrs Mod. Lord Index came, and stalk'd round the rooms as if he had been loaded with the wisdom of his whole library.

Lady Mor. Yes, he look'd as solemn as a monkey after mischief.

Sir Fred. (*Mimicking his solemnity.*) And drew up his face in form, like a writ of inquiry into damages, with a "Take notice" engrossed in front.

L. Mor. He would not stay late, for his lordship is as careful of his health as he is vain of his understanding.

Lady Mor. And yet he is but a kind of rush-can-

dle; he may glimmer a long while, but will never give much light.

L. Mor. It seems strange that your people who have acquired a little knowledge always think they possess an infinite deal; while those who are the best informed appear continually conscious of wanting more.

Gen. Not strange at all, my lord. Amassing knowledge is like viewing the sun through a telescope; you enlarge the object, but you destroy the glare.

Mrs Mod. Did not you observe that, notwithstanding the pearl-powder, my lady Bloom's neck looked remarkably sallow?

L. Mor. Oh, as a Jew's face under a green umbrella.

Sir Fred. The widow Twinkle, as usual, talked a vast deal about reputation.

Lady Mor. One is apt to admire a thing one wants.

L. Mor. She always takes infinite pains to place her reputation, like broken china in a beaufet, with the best side outward.

Lady Mor. She may plaster and cement, but will never bring it to bear handling.

Mrs Mod. Mr Pensive, the poet, came in too.

Sir Fred. Yes, but as nobody took any notice of him, he presently went out again.

Gen. A great proof of his good sense.

Sir Fred. Your poets and sheriff's officers are a kind of people every body has heard of, but that nobody chuses to know.

Lady Mor. Or if you are under the necessity of receiving a private call from them now and then, it would be quite disgraceful to be seen with them in public.

L. Mor. Your ladyship used to be very partial to Mr Pensive.

Gen. Yes, her ladyship *used* to have many singular partialities. She was once partial to merit and virtue, wherever she found them: she had a partiality for order, economy, and domestic duties, likewise; nay, she even went so far as to cherish a partiality for your lordship!

Lady Mor. Ha! ha! ha! Odious partialities!

Sir Fred. } Ha! ha! ha!
Mrs Mod. }

L. Mor. Ma—ma—madam!—Odious!

Lady Mor. Ha! ha! ha! To—to be sure, sir—is it not odious to be unfashionable?

Mrs Mod. Certainly. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Fred. Ha! ha! ha! I protest, general, you —Ha! ha! ha!—you are too severe.

Gen. Am I?

Sir. Fred. Ha! ha! ha! You are really.
Mrs. Mod. Ha! ha! ha! Yes, you are indeed, general.
Lady Mor. Ha! ha! ha! Yes, yes, you absolutely are. } (*All together.*)

Gen. Humph! Why don't you laugh, my lord?

L. Mor. I do. Ha! ha! ha!—I—I—I do, general; though, as to severity, I own I—I don't see it in that light.

Gen. No!

L. Mor. No; I cannot accuse myself of any fault, unless the love of pleasure be one.

Gen. Hah! (*Sighs.*) And your catalogue of pleasures, I fancy, is pretty extensive.

L. Mor. Not half so extensive as one could wish.

Gen. A dice-box, for instance, is one.

L. Mor. A very principal one.

Lady Mor. My short experience hardly entitles me to venture an opinion; but I find a wonderful similarity between gaming and a cold bath.—You

have a—a tremor—a—a hesitation at first, but having once plunged in, you are thrown into the most delightful glow!

L. Mor. Oh, an ardent tingling.

Gen. Beware, sir, that a shivering fit does not succeed.

Mrs Mod. } Ha, ha, ha!
Lady Mor. }

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! You really have no mercy, general.—You hit so often and so hard, egad!

L. Mor. I'm vastly—happy—to see you all so merry, though, upon my honour, I can't find out the jest.

Gen. That is strange, when you yourself make it.

Lady Mor. Not in the least—There is many a professed joker who does not understand his own wit.

Gen. (*Half aside.*) I am tired, disgusted with this mixture of folly and wickedness.—(*Aloud.*) May I intrude so far upon your ladyship as to obtain half an hour's private conversation?

Lady Mor. Why—upon my word—general—I—I have so many affairs on hand to-day, that I must beg you—to excuse me:—To-morrow you may command me for as long as you please.

Sir Fred. Ay, do, general, have the complaisance to wait till to-morrow, when my lady will be more at leisure.

Gen. (*Deeply affected.*) Well, madam, I did not use to be thought an intruder by your ladyship, and will not begin now—But since I cannot have the honour to tell you privately, I still think myself bound to do my duty, and inform you publicly, you are in the hands of sharpers, "who will filch from you your good name."—(*With great anxiety.*) Nay, perhaps, you are on the very eve of destruction!—Oh, guile!—Can it be?—My heart is full!—I—(*Goes up to her, and most affectionately takes and presses her hand.*) Lady Morden, I have no utterance—But if there be

such a thing as sympathy, some small portion of the horror I now feel will communicate itself to you.

SCENE III.

LORD MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK, LADY MORDEN, *and* MRS MODELY.

(LADY MORDEN *seems affected,* LORD MORDEN *deeply so,* SIR FREDERICK *and* MRS MODELY *disconcerted.——A pause.*)

Lady Mor. (*Endeavouring to recover herself.*)—The—the general—has the—strangest way of—affecting—and—harrowing—Has not he, my lord?

L. Mor. Ye—yes—Upon my honour, he—he—I don't know how—(*Putting his hand to his heart.*)

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!—The general—the general is a true Don Quixote: He first creates giants, and then kills them.

Lady Mor. Yes. Ha, ha, ha!—His head is full of—of windmills, to grind moral sentiments.—But come, Mrs Modely, you have not seen my new purchase.

Mrs Mod. Oh, what, the Actæon?

Sir Fred. Is it come home?

Lady Mor. Oh yes—I could not rest till I had it. (*Talking as they are going off.*)

Mrs Mod. Come, my lord—I long to see it!

Lady Mor. The tints are charming.

Mrs Mod. So I hear—the grouping excellent!

Lady Mor. Oh, delightful!

SCENE IV.

HARRIET, *from the anti-chamber*, SIR FREDERICK.

Har. Hist!—Sir Frederick.

Sir Fred. (*Turning back.*) Oh!—Well, sir, how proceeds your amour? I thought you had been busied in schemes about that affair.

Har. Faidth, and I am so—But I don't believe I can succeed without your assistance.

Sir Fred. Perhaps you are a little scrupulous about the means.

Har. Me!—Indeed and you have mistaken your man—Why, you don't think, Sir Frederick, I regard the complaints or tears of women!—You and I, sure, seek our own gratification, not their happiness—For if the love of man sought only the happiness of woman, faidth, there would be nothing but dull marriages, fond husbands, and legitimate children; and we should lose all the satisfaction of seducing wives, ruining daughters, and of bringing so many fine, sweet, innocent craters upon the town!

Sir Fred. Oh, it would strangely reverse the order of things.

Har. Order!—Faidth, and it would occasion a blessed confusion—In Doctor's Commons.

Sir Fred. For my part, present pleasure is my pursuit; I never disturb my imagination with dismal conjectures on future consequences.

Har. Faidth, and you are right—For, as you say, it would be dismal enough to trace these consequences into—into streets, and hospitals, and—places that the imagination sickens at.

Sir Fred. Marriage, you say, is not your object.

Har. Oh no! I don't like that said matrimony music.

Sir Fred. A mortgaged rent-roll only can make it supportable. A wife is like a child's whistle, which every breath can play upon, but which no art can make melodious.

Har. Faidth, and you have viry proper notions about wives. So whin the dare crater gave a marriage hint, why, I told her a dale of boister consarning an old cross fadther, and being under age, and that I could not marry these three months. For you know one does not stand for a good double handful of oaths and lies, whin one wants to ruin a sweet, kind angel, that one loves.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!—Suppose you were to make a sham marriage.

Har. A sham marriage?—Faidth, and I would make that, if there were not a parcel of low rascals that make halters.

Sir Fred. Pshaw! That's a paltry, mechanical fear.

Har. But you—you were telling me, you know, of—a—scheme—

Sir Fred. Oh! The contract.

Har. Ay, faidth! The contract. You said you would shew it me.

Sir Fred. I will—I have brought it for that purpose. (*Feeling for his pocket-book.*) I lately found it an efficacious expedient.

Har. And successful?

Sir Fred. Would have been, but for an unlucky accident.

Har. But there is one small impediment.

Sir Fred. What is that?

Har. Westminster-Hall.

Sir Fred. Baw! A house of cards.

Har. Oh, and that it is; for 'tis supported by knaves, and full of tricks.

Sir Fred. Here—here is the very contract I myself gave.

Har. Ay! (*Endeavouring to conceal her eagerness.*)

Sir Fred. And here a counterfeit copy, with a few slight, but essential alterations.

Har. I understand—To put the change upon her. (*With an anxious eye continually toward the contract.*)

Sir Fred. Which you may easily take, or make an opportunity to do.

Har. (*With affected indifference.*) Will, thin, lind them both to me, and, faidth, you shall see fine diversion.

Sir Fred. No—I—I'll have them copied for you. This is signed and sealed.

Har. Arrah, what of that?—Ha, ha, ha! Sure, you are not afraid you would be obliged to marry a man?

Sir Fred. No—The only danger in trusting them to you is, that of losing them; and even then there could be no ill consequence, except by falling into the hands of one who is far enough from London.

Har. Ay, ay, lit me have them—I give you my honour to make a proper use of them.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! You are a promising youth, and it would be a pity such talents should be baulked—So here—here.

Har. Promising? Oh, faidth, and I hope to surprise even you yourself. You shall presently hear of the succiss of your schaimes.

SCENE V.

SIR FREDERICK, GABRIEL.

Gab. (*Looking after* HARRIET.) There a' goes—

Hop, step, and jump!—(*Pause.*)—Ecod, she does it featly!

Sir Fred. She! What's that you say?

Gab. How a' skipp'd into the carriage!—There! Off it drives! Whur-r-r-r! Rattling away!

Sir Fred. What does the fellow mean?—S'death!—Sure!—Who are you talking of?

Gab. Why, of that Irish gentleman-like lady.

Sir Fred. Lady!

Gab. I wur coming straight to tell you!—There is a plot, mun, against you!

Sir Fred. A plot. (*Runs toward the door.*)

Gab. Nay, you are too late!—A's gone!—Three streets off by this.

Sir Fred. Confusion!

Gab. Ees—She means to breed a confusion.

Sir Fred. Who?

Gab. Miss Harriet.

Sir Fred. Harriet!—By Heavens, 'tis she!

Gab. Ees—'tis she.

Sir Fred. Secure fool! Ineffable idiot!—And yet, in that disguise, Lucifer himself could not have discovered her!—And who told you?

Gab. Why, his worship's gentleman, Mr Lapelle—A' o'erheard her tell my lord aw her plot.

Sir Fred. What course shall I take?

Gab. Suppose I wur to watch, and when she comes back, let your worship know?

Sir Fred. Do so—But be very careful—and be very secret.

Gab. Ees, ees; I remember the place, mun.

Sir Fred. Away—be watchful, and be rewarded.

SCENE VI.

Sir Fred. This is a thunder-stroke!—Lord Morden

in the plot too!—It will come to Lady Morden's ears; I shall be blown, all my plans disconcerted, myself laughed at, and my reputation eternally ruined! (*Walks about.*) Ha!—There is one way to prevent the mischief yet—By Heavens, it cannot fail!—— I will go to Lady Morden, and, with feigned penitence, tell her every circumstance myself; only making her believe I knew Harriet when I returned the contract. She will admire my candour, think my contrition real, and thus will I turn this seeming disaster to excellent account, by making it an additional proof of sincerity and affection for her ladyship!—Dear Wit, I thank thee; thou never forsakest me at a crisis!—Indeed!—My lord! And my young lady!—Ah ha!—But you shall find one, perhaps, who can plot as deeply as yourselves.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

LORD MORDEN, LAPELLE.

L. Mor. Into what an abyss of evil have I plunged, through inexperience, want of reflection, and an absurd imitation of fashionable follies!—Lapelle.

Lap. My lord.

L. Mor. Is the young—young gentleman returned?

Lap. (*Significantly.*) No, my lord.

L. Mor. I am on the rack!—The liberties in which Lady Morden permits this Sir Frederick are insupportable!—Unable to be silent, and ashamed to complain, I am tortured by contending passions.—Lapelle—let me know the instant—the—the young gentleman comes back.

Lap. (*Going.*) Yes, my lord.

L. Mor. Stay—(*To himself.*) What if I were to inform Lady Morden of this affair?—Surely she could not shut her eyes against such a palpable, such an unprincipled attempt at seduction!—(*Aloud.*) Go, and tell your lady I beg to speak with her a moment.

SCENE II.

L. Mor. What an absurd being is man!—Not a fortnight ago, Lady Morden was totally indifferent to me, and now I am in danger of losing her. I find I love her—to distraction love her!—Yet to sink into a civil, sober, domestic man—to become the standing jest of all those high-spirited companions whose society I have courted, whose maxims I have pretended to admire——

SCENE III.

LORD MORDEN, LADY MORDEN.

Lady Mor. So, my lord, in melancholy contemplation; and at home too!

L. Mor. Yes, madam.

Lady Mor. Lud! I wonder how your lordship

can endure home! Of all places in the world, home is certainly the most disagreeable.

L. Mor. Did not your ladyship meet Lapelle?

Lady Mor. Lapelle! no.

L. Mor. I—I wished to see your ladyship.

Lady Mor. To see me! What can your lordship possibly want with me?

L. Mor. To speak to you.

Lady Mor. Speak to me!—You perfectly surprise me.

L. Mor. On a subject which—I—I scarcely know how to begin.

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha! What can have made your lordship so serious? Ha, ha, ha! I declare I never saw you look so grave before!—This must be some very important secret, that can occasion your lordship to look so very dismal!—I vow I am quite impatient—Come, my lord—Why don't you proceed?

L. Mor. I—I begin to find—I have been very foolish.

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Is that the secret?

L. Mor. I—I feel I have been to blame.

Lady Mor. To blame, my lord! How? Which way?—Or, if you have, how does it concern me?

L. Mor. Your ladyship used to think our interests inseparable.

Lady Mor. For which your lordship always laughed at me. And I freely own I was a very silly—out-of-the-way woman.

L. Mor. Perhaps not, madam.

Lady Mor. How, my lord!—Not?—Your lordship is very polite, but you know very well I was.

L. Mor. Lady Morden, you once loved me—You yourself, not long since, kindly owned you did.

Lady Mor. Very true, my lord; but why—why now should *you* reproach me with my follies?

L. Mor. I feel the severity of your reproof—It is no more than I merit!

Lady Mor. (*With affected surprise.*) I really don't understand your lordship!—I—I meant no reproof—We loved each other as long as it was agreeable to us, and if my passion happened to outlast your lordship's, that was none of your fault. These are the principles of—of all rational people, you know, my lord.

L. Mor. They are principles, madam, that, from my soul, I wish I had never heard!

Lady Mor. Upon my honour, you astonish me! —Have not I learnt them from you yourself?

L. Mor. Unjustifiable, madam, as my conduct may have been, I never carried them to the same excess as Sir Frederick Fashion.

Lady Mor. (*With an air of pique.*) Sir Frederick Fashion may perhaps be as capable of reformation as your lordship.

L. Mor. Your ladyship may—may be partial.

Lady Mor. Partial!

L. Mor. Who so great a libertine as this Sir Frederick?

Lady Mor. Has been—He has candour enough to confess it.

L. Mor. Has been!—Madam, there exists a present proof of deliberate seduction!—An injured lady—

Lady Mor. (*Smiling.*) Oh! What, the—the—the Croat.

L. Mor. Madam!

Lady Mor. What's your surprise, my lord? Don't I tell you he has confessed all his follies to me?

L. Mor. But, madam, did he mention the contract?

Lady Mor. To be sure! And the—the counterfeit copy,—with the generous manner in which he just now returned Harriet the original, though she thought he did not know her.

L. Mor. I am petrified!—Lady Morden—I perceive I have lost your affections.

Lady Mor. My lord—I am above dissimulation.—Yes—I own I have a passion, too permanent to be shaken, and the satisfaction of a self-assurance that he who at present possesses my heart will not so soon be weary of me as he who who had it before.

L. Mor. You cut me to the soul!—Did you know what I feel!

Lady Mor. Feel, my lord! Ha, ha, ha! Oh fie!—Your lordship is a man of fashion, not of feeling.

L. Mor. Hovering mischief, madam, has quickened benumbed nature in me (*Kneels, and takes her hand.*) Oh! let me conjure you, Lady Morden, to reflect on your present situation! I have conducted you to the horrid precipice of guilt and destruction! Oh! suffer me to save, to snatch you from danger!

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE IV.

LORD MORDEN, LADY MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! How now, my lord! Ha, ha, ha! Making love to your wife?

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! Sir Frederick, if you had but come a little sooner, you would have heard the most delightful morality!

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! Morality from my lord?

L. Mor. Yes, sir, morality from my lord!

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, I assure you, he is quite serious. (*Retires, coquetting with* SIR FREDERICK.)

L. Mor. Rejected! Ridiculed! Despised! Their sport! Their scorn! Their subject for open sarcasm,

laughter, and contempt! Oh! insupportable. (LORD MORDEN *retires into his own room.*)

SCENE V.

LADY MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK.

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha! My lord has a mind to fall in love with me once more.

Sir Fred. Nobody but my lord, madam, would ever have ceased a moment to love you!

L. Mor. Well, Sir Frederick, and may I then at last flatter myself I have found that sympathy of soul for which I so long have sighed?

Sir Fred. Alas, madam, I dare not rank myself your equal!—No, I dare not!—There is such infinitude of perfection in your every thought, look, and expression, that to merit you were to be, as you are, something celestial!—Yet such virtue as mere humanity may arrive at, I will exhaust nature with endeavours, and weary Heaven with prayers to acquire!

Lady Mor. There is surely some secret charm in our words.

Sir Fred. Did I think the gratification of any sinister passion influenced my present conduct; were it not my hope to remove you from the cold embrace of satiated apathy, to the sweet and endless transports of love, founded on, permit me to say, on a congeniality of soul and sentiment; did I not feel an innate conviction that there already subsists between us a tie of the most indissoluble nature, an immaculate tie, a marriage of the mind, superior infinitely to all human institutions; did I not think and feel thus, I would instantly, dreadful as the image is to thought, re-

nounce that heaven which I have had the presumption to contemplate, nay, aspire to possess!

Lady Mor. And if, after all this, you should prove false, Sir Frederick!

Sir Fred. False, madam!—Oh! Let me conjure you to inflict any punishment on me, rather than that of suspecting my sincerity!—Thus, kneeling, on this angelic hand I vow——

SCENE VI.

LADY MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK, LORD MORDEN.

L. Mor. I cannot resist the impulse which—How!—Sir Frederick!

Sir Fred. (*Rising.*) My lord. (*With perfect indifference.*)

L. Mor. So, madam.

Lady Mor. So, sir.

L. Mor. You can listen to *morality* from others, madam, if not from me!

Lady Mor. Oh! I—I have no dislike to a sermon, when I—admire the preacher.

L. Mor. Madam, if you have no respect for my honour, you might have some for my feelings, and—

Lady Mor. (*Interrupting him.*) A, a—Hold, hold, my lord—You are beginning your *discourse* again, but I am in a hurry, and will hear you draw your conclusions some other opportunity.

L. Mor. Madam——

Lady Mor. Nay, I will, upon my honour.

SCENE VII.

LORD MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK.

L. Mor. Hold, sir; a word with you, if you please.

Sir Fred. With me, my lord?

L. Mor. With you.

Sir Fred. Willingly. Your lordship seems in so pleasant a humour——

L. Mor. Sir, I am in a humour neither to be trifled with nor sneered at.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! I can assure your—ha, ha, ha!—your lordship, no man is happier to see you in your present temper than I am.

L. Mor. Look you, Sir Frederick, you and I have been too long of the same school, for me to be ignorant of your principles. But I begin to detest them!

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Mor. They are now, at this very moment, rending my heart: they have planted a nest of adders in my bosom.—In short, sir—you must forbear your visits to Lady Morden.

Sir Fred. My lord—

L. Mor. I am serious—determined.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! When her *ladyship* gives me this advice, it may—perhaps—be followed.

L. Mor. It must and shall be followed, sir, when I give it.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Mor. Ridiculous as it may appear to you, and such as you, I feel and will assert a husband's rights.

Sir Fred. Ha, ha, ha! I congratulate your lordship on the keenness and delicacy of your feelings; they give me great pleasure, infinite pleasure, upon my soul. Ha, ha, ha!—As to—a husband's rights, I—

have no doubt you will—very shortly—be in full possession of them all.

L. Mor. Sir, I will have you know I am at present in *full* possession of them all.

Sir Fred. May be so, egad!

L. Mor. And can no longer forbear telling you, I believe you to be a villain.

Sir Fred. Ah, now your lordship is perfectly explicit. (*Draw, and fight.*)

SCENE VIII.

LORD MORDEN, SIR FREDERICK, GABRIEL, *who runs fearless between them, and looks first at one, then at the other.*

L. Mor. How now, sirrah! How dare you take this liberty?

Gab. Nay, eod, there do seem to be some danger in it; an I had not dared to dare, but that I thought that your lordship wou'd na stick I.

L. Mor. Be gone, sirrah!

Gab. Nay, but my lady sent me, and would be glad to speak wi' your honour's worship.

L. Mor. With me?

Gab. Oh no! Not wi' your lordship's honour's worship; but wi' his worship's honour, Sir Frederick Fashion.

Sir Fred. This is no place, my lord; we'll settle this business to-morrow—To-morrow, my lord—To-morrow——

SCENE IX.

LORD MORDEN, GABRIEL.

L. Mor. Damnation!—Torture!—To-morrow?—He has some concealed meaning—A thousand little circumstances tell me some mischief is brooding—I could not have believed Lady Morden so confirmed, so far gone in guilt.—The behaviour of them all, their dark illusions, their sarcasms pointed at me, convince me they are acting in conjunction to hold me up.—How now, sirrah! What do you stand gaping at?—How durst you come between us?

Gab. Why, ecod, I knew that, wi' us, i' th' country, murder would have been against the commandements; and I had forgot that here in town you have no commandements.

L. Mor. This fool can see the excesses of passion in their true light.

Gab. I'm sorry 'at I angered your lordship's worship; because as why I wur determined to do like the rest of my neighbours; for, sartinly, wur a body to keep the commandements, while every body else is breaking them—a'd be a poor devil, indeed. (LORD MORDEN *walks about.*) Belike, your lordship be a bit jealousy like?

L. Mor. How, sirrah?

Gab. Nay, I should no' a' wondered an you wur—An I had no' been told that your Londoneers be never jealousy like.

L. Mor. Should not have wondered!—Why not, sirrah?

Gab. Nay, ecod, I munna tell!

L. Mor. Tell what?

Gab. Nay, that's it—As I said, I munna tell!

L. Mor. (*Puts his hand to his sword.*) Speak all you know instantly, or——

Gab. (*With half serious, half sulky reproof.*) Nay, nay, donna be in a passion, your worship—I be no goose: you munna spit me.

L. Mor. Speak, I say—I'll have your secret or your soul.

Gab. Ecod, I believe your worship will be puzzled to find either—though that Sir Frederick be an old fox—A's used to steal chicken.

L. Mor. Be explicit. What has he done?

Gab. Done—Oh—A's—

L. Mor. What?

Gab. Promised me a place!

L. Mor. Zounds!

Gab. And, moreover, a' ga' me a purse, which is better still; for your worship's grace do know that an egg in hand is better nur a hen in expectation.

L. Mor. Suppose, sirrah, I give you my purse too.

Gab. Nay, ecod, an you gi' it me—I believe I shall—I shall take it.

L. Mor. There, sir.

Gab. Thank your worship's lordship.—(GABRIEL *puts up the purse, and walks leisurely into* LADY MORDEN'S *dressing-room.*)

SCENE X.

LORD MORDEN, HARRIET.

L. Mor. (*Following* GABRIEL.) Why, hark you, sirrah!—Come back!—Why, rascal!

Har. (*Calling.*) St! My lord! My lord!

L. Mor. (*Looking back to* HARRIET, *and then recollecting* GABRIEL.) Astonishing effrontery!

Har. My lord!

L. Mor. (*Returning.*) Oh! madam, I am distracted.

Har. Have patience but for one quarter of an hour, and I hope to rid you of all your fears, and inflict that punishment on the author of them which he dreads most.

L. Mor. How, madam?

Har. By exposing him; making him what he delights to make others—a subject of laughter and contempt.

L. Mor. Which way, madam?

Har. We may be overheard: step with me into the anti-chamber, and I'll inform you.

SCENE XI.

GABRIEL, SIR FREDERICK.

Gab. (*Peeping after* LORD MORDEN *and* HARRIET, *and then calling.*) Sir Frederick!—Sir Frederick!

Sir Fred. Well, what's the matter? How camest thou off with his lordship?

Gab. Off? Ecod, I—I wish you may come off as well.

Sir Fred. I!

Gab. Ees—Why, mun, there be the bailiffs below!

Sir Fred. Bailiffs!

Gab. Ees—Sent by the Irish gentleman, lady I mean, a'ter your worship!—Ecod, hur is determined to ha' you safe!

Sir Fred. The devil! What's to be done?—Is she with them?

Gab. No; hur be come back, and is gone into the anti-chamber wi' my lord.

Sir Fred. And has not seen them?

Gab. Likely not.

Sir Fred. Here, quick, change clothes with me, and tell them you are Sir Frederick Fashion.

Gab. Me!—Ecod, thank you for that—No, no—I would na' be in your coat for fifty pounds!

Sir Fred. Fool! they durst not detain *you*.

Gab. I'll take care they sha'n't.

Sir Fred. S'death! What's to be done?

Gab. Ecod—Suppose—Suppose I wur to go and tell the Irish gentleman somebody wanted *hur*, and so make 'em arrest she?

Sir Fred. Ha! Exquisite fellow! I conceive—Away: send her instantly!

SCENE XII.

SIR FREDERICK, *two Bailiffs.*

Bail. Is your name Sir Frederick Fashion, sir?

Sir Fred. No, sir; but Sir Frederick will be here directly, if you have any business with him.

Bail. (*Aside to his companion.*) Have your handkerchief ready, should he make any noise, for fear of a rescue.—This is a very serious affair. (*To* SIR FREDERICK.) Pray, sir, what kind of person is Sir Frederick.

Sir Fred. Um—a handsome—agreeable little gentleman, and very young.

Bail. May I ask, sir, how he is dressed?

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) Gad! well remember'd.—(*To the*

Bailiffs.) Dressed! Oh! he is dressed for—for the masquerade—Here he comes. (*The Bailiffs retire a little upon the watch.*)

SCENE XIII.

SIR FREDERICK, *Bailiffs*, HARRIET.

Sir Fred. (*To* HARRIET.) Well, Sir Frederick! Ha, ha, ha! How goes your scheme.

Har. Oh ho!—Faidth, and are you so jocular?

Sir Fred. I have been thinking this is a dangerous business, and would advise you not to give the girl that contract—It may bring you into trouble.

Bail. (*Aside to his companion.*) You hear!

Har. Oh! Faidth, and she has it safe enough.

Bail. (*Advances.*) Sir Frederick Fashion, (*Touches* HARRIET *on the shoulder,*) you are my prisoner, sir—I have a special writ against you.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Against me!—Arrah, friend, but you are making a bit of a bull here.

Bail. We know what we are about, sir. My carriage is below: you shall be treated like a gentleman; but we must beg you to go with us instantly, and without noise.

Har. (*Alarmed, and forgetting the brogue.*) I tell you, friend, you mistake the person.

SCENE XIV.

SIR FREDERICK, HARRIET, *Bailiffs*, GABRIEL.

Gab. (*Goes up to* HARRIET.) Here, Sir Frederick, here be a card from Colonel Castoff, wi' his compliments.

Har. Sirrah! me!

Gab. (*With pretended astonishment.*) Ees, to be sure!

Bail. Sir, we must be gone.

Har. This is a concerted trick.—Here—(*As soon as* HARRIET *begins to call, the Bailiffs clap the handkerchief over her mouth, and hurry off with her.*)

SCENE XV.

GABRIEL, SIR FREDERICK.

Gab. Did not I do it rarely?

Sir Fred. Do!—I could wonder and worship thee! In half a year thou wouldst make an ass of Machiavel!—Oh that I could but retrieve that cursed contract.

Gab. I do think I could get it.

Sir Fred. Ay!—Nay, I do almost begin to believe in miracles! Which way?

Gab. No matter for that—What will you gie me?

Sir Fred. Whatever thou canst wish—A hundred guineas——

Gab. And the place in the excise?

Sir Fred. Any thing, every thing!—Run, try, fly!—Think, succeed, and I'll make an emperor of thee!

Gab. Ees—I'll be emperor of excise-men.

SCENE XVI.

SIR FREDERICK, MRS MODELY, EMILY.

Sir Fred. The shrewdness and abilities of this fellow are amazing!

Mrs Mod. (*Entering.*) Yes, my sweet little Emily, the greatest beauty in London would be envied, had she made such a conquest.

Em. Ah!—you say so.

Mrs Mod. Say! Why, to-morrow morning the whole town will be in a flame!

Em. Well, that will be pure.

Mrs Mod. Oh, Sir Frederick!

Sir Fred. (*Runs to* EMILY.) My life! my soul! my transport!

Em. (*To* MRS MODELY.) What sweet words!

Mrs Mod. You are very much obliged to me, I assure you. I have been speaking to my sweet, dear little Emily here in your behalf.

Sir Fred. Then, madam, I am inexpressibly obliged to you.

Em. Yes, Mrs Modely is very much your friend, and very much my friend.—A'n't you, Mrs Modely?

Mrs Mod. Yes, my little dear, I am, indeed, *very* much your friend; and if I had not the best opinion in the world of Sir Frederick, would not have spoken as I have.

Em. Well, Sir Frederick, have you ordered the chaise and four?

Sir Fred. (*Pretending to be afraid* Mrs MODELY *should overhear.*) Yes!—Hush!

Em. Nay, you may say any thing before Mrs Modely.—I have told her all; for you know she is my friend.

Mrs Mod. Yes, yes, Sir Frederick, be assured I will not betray any secret, the keeping of which will make my dear Emily so happy.

Em. Yes, we shall be so happy!—You know, Sir Frederick, you swear to marry me.

Sir Fred. Solemnly! (*All through the scene he looks anxiously round at intervals, fearful of being surprised.*)

Em. Well, but swear it again now, before Mrs Modely.

Sir Fred. By all the saints!

Em. Saints! Pshaw! you should swear by—by my bright eyes, that dim the stars.

Sir Fred. Oh! by those bright eyes, that dim the blazing sun.

Em. And—and my beauties, that eclipse the blushing moon.

Sir Fred. Ay, by those, and all your burning charms, I swear.

Em. To marry me the moment we come to Scotland.

Sir Fred. The moment we come to Scotland.

Em. And if we are pursued——

Sir Fred. To fight for you!—die for you!

Em. Oh! that will be delightful!

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) The devil it will!

Em. Come, let us set off. My band-box is ready.

Sir Fred. That is impossible, my angel.

Em. Impossible!

Sir Fred. I have not ordered the chaise till ten o'clock.

Em. Oh dear! what, two whole hours longer!

Sir Fred. They are two ages, I grant. (*Looking*

round.) Forgive my fears, my dearest Emily, but though the pleasure of your company is the most precious thing on earth, a—a—yet——

Em. What, you want me gone?

Sir Fred. Rather than you should think so unkindly, I will run the hazard of being surprised, and eternally separated from you.

Em. Will you? I am sure you don't love me then. However, I'll go. You will be sure to be ready the moment the clock strikes ten.

SCENE XVII.

SIR FREDERICK, MRS MODELY.

Sir Fred. Time is precious. Here have been such plots against me!

Mrs Mod. Plots!

Sir Fred. Oh! I have escaped Scylla and Charybdis! But wind and tide are now both with me. Lady Morden is to meet me here in half an hour. Through that door is her chamber.

Mrs Mod. Oh, you vile creature!

Sir Fred. What prude, to-morrow, will dare pretend that woman and education are a match for man and nature?

Mrs Mod. And so you will persist in your wickedness, in spite of my persuasions?

Sir Fred. Lady Morden has still all the rhodomontade of love in her brain; thinks of nothing but cooing constancy and eternal raptures!

Mrs Mod. Simple woman!

Sir Fred. Except, indeed, tormenting her husband, which seems to give the sin a double sweetness.

Mrs Mod. Or she would be no wife.

Sir Fred. So, as soon as I am gone off with Emily, I will have a consolatory epistle delivered to her.

Mrs Mod. Compassionate toad!

Sir Fred. Here it is ready written, and, if I don't flatter myself, a master-piece.

Mrs Mod. Let me see, let me see.

Sir Fred. No; you shall hear. (*Reads.*) "Dear madam, though you are an angel, if there are other angels, am I to blame?"

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.

Sir Fred. (*Reads.*) "If man is naturally inconstant, and if I am a man, am I to blame?"

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.

Sir Fred. (*Reads.*) "If nature has made variety the highest enjoyment, am I to blame?"

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.

Sir Fred. (*Reads.*) "If, since happiness is the pursuit of us all, I am happy as often as I can, am I to blame?"

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.

Sir Fred. (*Reads.*) "Farewell, madam: circumstances, as you will find, force me thus suddenly from your arms, in which, I own, I found heaven centered; but if you should call me cruel, perjured, and ungrateful, because I act naturally, and therefore rationally, am I to blame?"

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.—Well, as I live, this is a master-stroke! Perfectly, as I thought I knew you, you have astonished me!

Sir Fred. Yes, 'tis the true Socratic mode. But now, my dear Mrs Modely, go you to Emily; prevent her disturbing us, and keep her in readiness.

Mrs Mod. Well, remember every thing is at stake, and be yourself.

Sir Fred. Fear me not: that prescience which they say is the forerunner of all great events gives me a happy assurance of success; a confidence that makes success certain.

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

GENERAL BURLAND.

Gen. I cannot keep from this house!—There is a foreboding of mischief, which haunts and perturbs my imagination!—And I fear with reason!—The malignant joy, the smothered exult, the obscure, ironical satire which ran through the discourse of that Sir Frederick, were not without a meaning.—I wish I had not consented to let Emily stay—He sneered, I remember, at the moment; nay, it seemed the sneer of triumph!—I wish she were safe at my own house.—Poor Lady Morden!—And is it possible?—Such rectitude of heart!—Such purity of sentiment!—I wish Emily were at home—Should my child, my darling fall, I were a wretch indeed!

SCENE II.

GENERAL BURLAND, LORD MORDEN.

L. Mor. (*Wildly.*) I am miserable! distracted! racked!—The thunderbolt has struck before I heard it!—Oh that its exterminating power had been final! But it has maimed, and deformed, and left a full feeling of wretchedness!

Gen. How now, my lord?

L. Mor. General, I am a wretch!—an irretrievable, eternal wretch!

Gen. What, and are you come to a sense of this, now it is too late?

L. Mor. There's the misery!—The curse is accomplished, and hope is fled!

Gen. Why, ay! Such is the infatuation of folly and vice, they will not believe vengeance has an arm, till its fatal gripe is felt!

L. Mor. I cannot support these tortures!—Oh that it were possible!

Gen. What?

L. Mor. To reclaim Lady Morden.

Gen. What then? Another month, and Sir Frederick Fashion, or any other libertine of fashion might take her.

L. Mor. Never!—Never!—Were her affections once again mine, the stroke of death only should separate us!

Gen. (*With deep compassion.*) Well, my lord, if you are at last convinced of the immensity of your loss—I pity you!

L. Mor. Oh! would you could relieve!

Gen. Would I could!—But you were a witness how ineffectual my endeavours were. However, walk with me into the anti-chamber, and let us consult what is best to be done.—Her principles I fear are shaken; the only rock on which virtue can stand secure.

L. Mor. Sapped, destroyed!—She avows her intents!—unblushingly avows them! And, recapitulating my errors, my crimes, dares me to complain of, or notice hers! Scorns and contemns me, and justly too, that such a thing as I should pretend to repeat or respect the word virtue!

Gen. It is what every husband, every father of a family must expect! His smallest follies will stand as precedents for a swarm of follies: and if he has any vices, they will propagate a *hideous brood, that* shall extirpate his name from the *earth*, or overwhelm it with obloquy!

SCENE III.

GABRIEL, SIR FREDERICK.

Gab. (*Peeping after* LORD MORDEN *and the General.*) Come, mun!—Your worship, come!

Sir Fred. Are they gone?

Gab. Ees.

Sir Fred. Well, what hast thou done?—Where is Harriet?

Gab. Oh, I ha' her safe.

Sir Fred. Thou!

Gab. Ees, mun—For when the bailiffs fauned out a wur a woman, they wur parfitly ravenous!

Sir Fred. And let her go?

Gab. Ees.

Sir Fred. S'death!

Gab. But I secured her.

Sir Fred. Secured! Impossible. How?

Gab. Nay, never do you mind how—I tell'ee, I ha' her safe.

Sir Fred. But where are the bailiffs?

Gab. In this house.

Sir Fred. The devil they are!

Gab. Ees, they be—waiting for your worship.

Sir Fred. Death and destruction!

Gab. but what o' that? I a' got the contract, mun.

Sir Fred. Hast thou?

Gab. Ees, here it is.

Sir Fred. Precious fellow! I cou'd worship thee Give it me.

Gab. (*Pulling his hand behind him.*) Nay, hold there!—wunna do that.

Sir Fred. Won't!

Gab. No—I wunna.

Sir Fred. Pshaw! Make no words, but deliver it —and here—here is—

Gab. Nay, put up your paper, for I wunna part wi' mine.

Sir Fred. S'death, fellow!

Gab. Nay, be mild tempered—stand where you be; for an you stir another step, I'll call the bailiffs.

Sir Fred. (*Aside.*) Cunning scoundrel!—He has me in his power, and time presses.—Well, Gabriel, be faithful, and, depend on't, I'll make thee a clever fellow.

Gab. Why, ecod, I think I am like a Monmouth-street coat—ready made.

Sir Fred. Thou rememberest the instructions I gave thee?

Gab. Parfitly.

Sir Fred. The chaise is to wait at the corner of the street.

Gab. Ees.

Sir Fred. Thou art to convey Emily's band-box away privately, and, if any questions are asked, to say it is Lord Morden's.

Gab. Ees.

Sir Fred. Hast thou taken care of the letter I gave thee?

Gab. Care! Ees, ees; I a' ta'en good care on't.

Sir Fred. Observe, thou art to deliver it to Lady Morden, half an hour after we are departed.

Gab. Half an hour before you are departed.

Sir Fred. Zounds! No, half an hour after, man.

Gab. Oh! Ees, ees; half an hour after.

Sir Fred. Now be gone.

Gab. But—but how will your worship get by the bailiffs?

Sir Fred. S'death, that's true!—Is there no disguise?

Gab. Why—ees—there be a long great coat i' th' hall.

Sir Fred. Ay, true!—Bring it me.

Gab. Nay, nay—I'll put it on first, and let 'em see me—so, then, when they see you, they'll think it be I.

Sir Fred. Excellent! Where are Lord Morden and the general?

Gab. I' th' t'other chamber.

Sir Fred. Unlucky! I wish they were any where else.

Gab. Oh!—an that be all, I'll soon make 'em budge.

Sir Fred. How?

Gab. Nay!—Lord, you're so quisitive!—I tell you I'll do't—I'll saunter through this door, lock it, and send 'em packing through t'other.

Sir Fred. Thou art the prince of plotters.—Away: be vigilant.

Gab. Oh! never do you fear me.

[*Goes into the anti-chamber.*

SCENE IV.

SIR FREDERICK, LADY MORDEN.

Sir Fred. This fellow would outwit a whole conclave of cardinals!

Lady Mor. Well, Sir Frederick! here I am, you see, punctual to my promise.

Sir Fred. (*With vast insinuation, seeming sincerity, and humble rapture, all through the scene.*) Oh, madam, how can I repay this bounty—this condescension?—Never.—My life were a poor sacrifice to such sweetness and such charms!

Lady Mor. Sir Frederick, this is a trying, a decisive moment! I am going to be either the most happy or

the most wretched of women! You tell me it is your wish, your resolution, to be no longer that general lover, that man of the world you have hitherto been thought.

Sir Fred. Say not, dear lady, it is either my wish or resolution! Heaven can testify, I have not the power to be any thing but what it shall please you to make me!

Lady Mor. I have owned to you that the levity I have lately affected is not natural to me; that my heart sighs for an acquaintance, a mate, that like itself is subject to all the sweet emotions of sensibility!—Yes, it was the first wish of my soul to find this correspondent heart!—a heart beating with the same ardour, vibrating to the same sensations, panting for the same pleasures, shrinking from the same pangs; pliant, yet firm; gentle, yet aspiring; passionate, yet pure!—Such I once thought Lord Morden's—Should I a second time be deceived!

Sir Fred. I am poor in proofs of sincerity! I have none to offer!—My former errors are present punishments! To deny, or even palliate them would imply intentional deceit; and this is a moment in which I would wish for men and gods to be witnesses of my truth!—I have had, I own, most libertine opinions of your gentle sex; but these I now solemnly renounce—Had I before met with a Lady Morden, I should before have made this renunciation!—But perhaps the women it has been my misfortune to know can serve in part the light esteem in which I held them. Never till now did I find one who could mutually inspire such passion and respect! Such agitated, burning hopes! Such excruciating fears, or thoughts so sanctified as those I this moment feel?

Lady Mor. Yet, Sir Frederick, I cannot help observing your conversation in society seems still tinged with the impurity of your former libertine principles.

Sir Fred. I own, Lady Morden, with confusion

own, I have not hitherto had the courage, or perhaps I have wanted strength to stem the torrent; but, aided by you, I feel I dare promise any thing!

Lady Mor. I confess, Sir Frederick, the mind finds some difficulty in rooting out fears planted in it by reiterated accusations. The stories the world tells of you are dreadful! And yet there is such heartfelt conviction attends your present words, that to me it is impossible to listen, and retain a doubt.

Sir Fred. This generous confidence transports me, fills me with gratitude, and inspires rapturous hope! (*Clasps her round the waist.*) Oh, gently suffer me to conduct you where love lies in panting, breathless ecstasy——

SCENE V.

To them GABRIEL, *abruptly, in a Great-coat; stands fixed, staring.*

Sir Fred. (*Sternly.*) How now!

Gab. (*Deliberately.*) Belike——you dunna want company?

Sir Fred. No, sir.

Gab. I thought as much.

Sir Fred. (*Laying hold of him.*) Be gone, instantly!

Gab. Nay! Hands off! (*Throws him from him.*) I sha'n't stir till I have delivered my message.

Sir Fred. What message? What have you to say?

Gab. (*Aloud.*) Why, the chaise and four be come.

Sir Fred. How?

Gab. (*Still louder.*) The band-box ready.

Sir Fred. Infernal booby!

Gab. Miss Emily waiting.

Sir Fred. (*Violently.*) Be gone, I say.

Gab. Gone!—Nay, sartinly you would no' ha' I run away wi' her.

Lady Mor. (*With contempt.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fred. Lady Morden!

Lady Mor. Ha, ha, ha!—Why, surely you! the never-failing victor! the fertile-brained Sir Frederick Fashion! who knows not defeat, and who never yet was at a loss for stratagems! though you are taken somewhat unawares, you cannot want invention!

Sir Fred. You'll pardon me, madam, if I want understanding to comprehend your meaning.

Lady Mor. Indeed!—Well, if you are so very dull of apprehension—am I to blame?

Sir Fred. Madam!

Lady Mor. Oh!—Do you recollect—this letter?

Sir Fred. How!—Faithless fiend! (*Goes to assault* GABRIEL, *who throws back his great-coat, and appears dressed as a gentleman.*)

Gab. Keep off, or dread the chastisement I am prompted instantaneously to inflict!

Sir Fred. Chastisement!—What is this?—Who are you?

Gab. A man!—You are—

Lady Mor. For Heaven's sake, brother—

Sir Fred. Brother!

Gab. Gabriel Wilmot; whose head is so full of the nonsense of friendship, honour, and honesty.

Sir Fred. I'll be revenged, however. (*Attacks* MR WILMOT *again.*)

SCENE VI.

To them LORD MORDEN *and General.*

L. Mor. Turn, wretch, and receive your punish-

ment from this arm! (SIR FREDERICK *turns on* LORD MORDEN.)

Gen. (*Beating down their swords.*) Oh, for shame! —Look to the lady.

Lady Mor. Oh, general!—Oh, my lord! (*Runs to* LORD MORDEN, *and falls on his neck.*)

L. Mor. My life! My ecstasy! My saviour!

SCENE VII.

To them MRS MODELY *and* EMILY.

Mrs Mod. Bless me, what uproar!—Hey-dey!—(*Aside.*) So, so! Here is a very pretty *denouement* to our plot, indeed!—(*Aloud.*) I see, good folks, you are all embroiled here; and as it is a very disagreeable thing to be present at family disputes, I'll—(*Is going; the General plants himself against the door.*)

Gen. Pray, madam, stay, and receive the compliments of the company—mine and your friend Emily's in particular.

Mrs Mod. Oh, with pleasure!

L. Mor. Mr Wilmot! My best brother!—Though you have in part acquainted me with what is past, yet it is so sudden—And you! my dearest lady! To find you still the same is joy unspeakable!

Lady Mor. The task of making you suppose I had effectually become what I seemed, was indeed most painful; but the loss of your affections were not pain! 'Twere horror!—I told you my passion was too permanent to be shaken—Ah! how could you imagine I meant another? Or think it possible I ever could forget that chaste, that ardent, that eternal love I have so repeatedly vowed?

L. Mor. Oh for words!—I am all love! gratitude! rapture! and amazement!

Gen. And so is Sir Frederick, apparently—Nay, even you, madam, seem a little surprised.

Mrs Mod. Me! Oh dear, no.

Lady Mor. (*To* SIR FREDERICK.) Dear sir, though you are a deep and excellent plotter, if there have been counterplots—am I to blame? (*Curtsies.*)

Mrs Mod. (*With affected candour.*) Certainly not.

Lady Mor. If man is sometimes vain, presumptuous, and unprincipled, and if you are a man—am I to blame?

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.

Mr Wil. If I assumed a mean disguise, that I might aid a sister to detect and expose the mean machinations of Seduction—am I to blame?

Mrs Mod. Certainly not.

Em. If, following the advice of this dear lady, (*To* LADY MORDEN,) simplicity has made cunning outwit itself—am I to blame? (*Curtseying first to* SIR FREDERICK, *and then to* MRS MODELY.)

Gen. (*With vast pleasure.*) Certainly not.

Lady Mor. If, since happiness is the pursuit of us all, I wish to be as happy as possible—(*Most affectionately taking* LORD MORDEN'S *hand*)—am I to blame?

Omnes. Certainly not.

Sir Fred. (*With affected ease.*) Certainly not.—So the catechism being ended, the scholars may depart.

Mr Wil. Certainly not.

Sir Fred. Sir!

Mr Wil. You forget the bailiffs.

Lady Mor. Besides, Sir Frederick, before you go, you must give me leave to introduce you to—

SCENE VIII.

To them HARRIET, *in Woman's Clothes, presented by* LADY MORDEN.

—This lady.

Sir Fred. Harriet!

Har. Yes, sir—that Harriet, whom, hearing she had happiness in view, and proportioning your ideal triumph to the weight of misery you might entail, you raised heaven and earth to bring to wretchedness and ruin.

Mrs Mod. Upon my honour, you—you are a sad man, Sir Frederick!—A very sad man!

(*The Company by their looks shew they understand* MRS MODELY'S *real character.*)

Har. But your vanity is humbled—you now stand detected; and, instead of envied, you will be sneered at by the depraved, pitied by the good, and henceforth avoided by the credulous young creatures you so manfully have delighted to involve in guilt and destruction!

Mrs Mod. A very dangerous man, indeed, Sir Frederick!

Gen. (*Ironically.*) Ay; beware of him, madam.

Mrs Mod. Oh! I—I will!

Har. Yes, sir, the finger of scorn points where it ought; you are exposed, and my resentment is appeased.

Sir Fred. Then, madam—the—the contract—

Har. There it is, sir. (*Returns it.*) I never meant to make any other use of it than what has been better effected by different means. (*Curtseying to* LADY MORDEN *and* MR WILMOT.)

Sir Fred. Madam—

Har. No thanks, sir.

Gen. No; they would sit a little awkwardly.

Lady Mor. And now, Sir Frederick, if, after this lesson, you should still retain your former principles and practices, and hereafter receive a still severer punishment, I hope you will acknowledge—we are not to blame. [*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

SCHOOL FOR PREJUDICE

A

COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OLD LIBERAL,	*Mr Munden.*
FRANK LIBERAL,	*Mr Lewis.*
EPHRAIM,	*Mr Fawcett.*
COUNSELLOR FRIENDLY,	*Mr Murray.*
MILDMAY,	*Mr H. Johnston.*
JOHN GROUSE,	*Mr Emery.*
CHEVY CHACE,	*Mr Farley.*
PARCHMENT,	*Mr Simmons.*
LANDLORD,	*Mr Davenport.*
TOUCH, TAP, TAKE, Bailiffs,	*Mr Atkins. Mr Abbot. Mr Wilde.*
SERVANT to Old Liberal,	*Mr Curties.*
1st SERVANT, 2d SERVANT, to Squire Chace,	*Mr Platt. Mr Blurton.*
WAITER.	*Mr Seaton.*

MRS HOWARD,	*Miss Chapman.*
MARIAN,	*Miss Murray.*
MISS LIBERAL,	*Mrs Davenport.*
FANNY LIBERAL,	*Mrs Mills.*
JENNY,	*Miss Simms.*
RACHEL,	*Mrs Whitmore.*

THE

SCHOOL FOR PREJUDICE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Hall at OLD LIBERAL'S.

Enter MISS LIBERAL, *followed by* JENNY.

Miss Lib. Now don't talk to me, Jenny, for it's in vain. Am I not about to make his fortune? Haven't I sacrificed my tender years, passions, and inclinations, to raise my cousin's consequence, treble his estate, and perhaps to grace the family tree with a coronet? And sha'n't I do what I please?

Jen. Certainly, madam—and if I was a lady of your quality and fortin, by gosh, I wou'd.

Miss Lib. And so I will, Jenny—I'll have that man, Grouse, the game-keeper, discharged immediately—that base-born son of my cousin's shall be

instantly dismissed the house; and without the girl is suffered to marry as I please, I'll throw the whole estate into Chancery, and see if all my cousin's knowledge of the law will help him to get it out again.

Jen. Why, dear me, ma'am, the more Mr Liberal has studied the law, the more he knows as how it would be impossible.

Miss Lib. True; but he studies nothing except how to cross my wishes and intentions. I endeavour to set an example of rigid propriety to the whole hamlet; but he, if a girl in it demeans herself with any of his servants or tenants, instead of clearing the parish of them, as a man of strict virtue ought to do, he pays a portion, truly, to marry them out of harm's way, as he calls it.

Jen. It's a shame, madam, so it is, that such wicked doings should be encouraged, while we poor vartuous girls are not taken the least notice of.

Miss Lib. Yes; and I must leave my money to be employed in settling other people's love affairs, forsooth! But I shall do no such thing. I promise you.

Jen. I'm sure if you do, ma'am, you're very much to be pitied.

Miss Lib. What! pitied! There again—after all my exertions, do I live to be pitied? No, thank Heaven, Miss Lucretia Liberal was never pitied in her life.

Jen. I'm sure, ma'am, I meant no offence; and for matter of that, though the neighbours do all pity old master very much, I don't think one of them would take such a liberty with your ladyship upon any account whatever.

Miss Lib. The neighbours are a set of meddling busy bodies; and the tenants, in consequence of my cousin's indulgence, are so familiar, that they do not even scruple sometimes to shake him by the hand—the children are suffered to feel in his pockets for

ginger-bread, and a common farmer's man, the other day, was actually disrespectful enough, behind his back, to call him a hearty good creature.

Jen. It's all his own fault. If he was but to carry himself like your ladyship, not a soul in the place wou'd say any such thing of him.

Miss Lib. How unlike is his conduct to that of my late friend, Mr Rackrent, from whom I have received so handsome a bequest! He never lowered his consequence among children and tenants—he kept them at awful distance, and the respect inspired by his presence was almost insupportable.

(OLD LIBERAL *without.*)

Old Lib. There, now, can't you be quiet? It's all settled, I tell you. Hold your tongue, for if my cousin was once to know—

OLD LIBERAL *enters, followed by* JOHN GROUSE.

Old Lib. Why, zounds! there she is.—Go about your business; you're a bad man, and I have nothing to say to you.

John. Why, but your worship said just now—

Old Lib. I didn't say a word—it's no such thing, I tell you.

Miss Lib. Mr Liberal, if you haven't entirely relinquished all respect for me, never let that John Grouse come into my presence. I have heard of his scandalous reports.—A chattering, tattling brute, that ought to be minding his family, instead of troubling his head with his betters.

Old Lib. So he ought, cousin—he ought to be minding his family.—And a fine family it is.—Seven as beautiful, healthy, chubby, dirty, little fellows—Why, the youngest has three teeth already, hasn't he?

John. Twife says he has four, and twea mear coming.

Old Lib. There, cousin, there! And then his bro-

ther begins to run about charmingly. I dare say—I like that boy, he's so mischievous.

Miss Lib. This is beyond bearing—Listen to me, sir—Will you dismiss that man?

Old Lib. Certainly, my dear cousin, by all means. Hark ye, sir, never presume to come into this house again—till I send for you. (*Apart.*)

John. Why, it makes na odds about coming to t'house; your worship—you'll be taking a walk, I warrant, aboon t'brig, and our Mary and I shall be vast glad to see you.—And as to the tales old Double-chalk war telling o' me, why, he's a chattering windy chap, and likes to have all the talk till himself; but as I wou'dn't fratch wi' him, why, I shall say nought on't; howiver, I shall have some talk with him, before I've done.

Miss Lib. Leave the room, sirrah! If my cousin will put up with it, I won't.

John. Well, but now do call, your worship—you need not to heed putting us in a muddle. We are frightful enough o' maist maks o' quality; but your worship we mind na mair than a post.

Old Lib. Well, well; get out, I say.

John. And the bairns will so chuckle, and laugh at your worship.

Old Lib. Pretty creatures! but get along, I tell you. (*Forces* JOHN *out.*) Impudent blockhead! But come, my dear Lucretia, don't look so angry. In future, I'm determined to do every thing upon your own plan.

Miss Lib. And so you ought, to be sure. Jenny, leave the room. [*Exit* JENNY. You know very well, cousin, that I do all for your good—and if I wasn't to interfere, things would be very different in this house.

Old Lib. They would—they would be very different, and I have often thought so.

Miss Lib. In the first place, you are too good na-

tured. Your benevolence, as you call it, is extravagance: Where is the use of having a great estate, only to spend it?

Old Lib. Where, indeed? For my part, I was foolish enough to think that the only utility of a great estate proceeded from its being in the hands of those who *would* spend it.

Miss Lib. Then, sir, your intended provision for that boy of yours, Frank, whom you are so fond of, is infinitely too much. Have you considered his situation? What can be lower in the estimation of propriety, than the character of a natural son?

Old Lib. Why, that of an unnatural father.

Miss Lib. Perhaps so: but you have not been unnatural. You have already done every thing for him a father could do.

Old Lib. Have I? Well, now, that is kind of you —It's the first compliment you ever paid me, and if you were to study till doomsday, you cou'dn't pay me a greater.

Miss Lib. But you pervert my meaning. Was it at all proper that the son of a kitchen wench—

Old Lib. No, no—housekeeper, you mean. No, hang it, I never descended so low as the kitchen, neither.

Miss Lib. No matter—was it necessary, I ask, to give such a child the education of a gentleman, and that he should be qualified to appear in the most fashionable circles?

Old Lib. To qualify a man for appearing in the circles of modern fashion, requires little or no education at all. I have brought him up very differently from the plan of *your* men of fashion. I have taught him, that no one is honourable, who is not of use—And if ever I find him inactive when an opportunity of doing good presents itself, I'll cut the dog off with a shilling.

Miss Lib. You have raised his notions too high—Had he been left to me—

Old Lib. You would have made a grocer or a chandler of him. Every bason of bohea I drank would have brought former follies to my remembrance, or I must have done penance before every wax candle in my drawing-room.

Miss Lib. And let me tell you, cousin, that to be an industrious tradesman, and to make a fortune by perseverance and integrity, is to acquire one of the highest ranks society can boast.

Old Lib. Yes, and let me tell *you*, cousin, that the man who is rich himself, and leaves his child, legal or illegal, no other materials than perseverance and industry for the formation of his fortune, justly deserves to be reckoned in the *lowest* ranks of society.

Miss Lib. Nonsense, I tell you There is, and ought to be a medium in ev'ry thing.

Old Lib. I know it; but I, like a stupid old blockhead, could never find any medium in a father's affection. I love my boy, and I love my girls; I love ev'ry body's boys and girls, and if you had a dozen, I should only like you the better for it.

Miss Lib. Me! Mercy forbid! Did you ever hear poor dear Mr Rackrent say so—O' my conscience, I believe you carry your romantic notions so far, that, if your fortune permitted, you would be a father to all the children in the parish.

Old Lib. O, I wish I could—I'd make 'em all so happy—odsbobs, I'd—

Miss Lib. Stop, sir—I've no more leisure to give good advice to so little purpose. I am now going to fetch home your daughter, who this day bids adieu to school.—And I leave you to consider how far it may be worth while to prefer your own narrow system to the direction of a relation, who has fifty thousand pounds, to place in or out of the family, as she pleases. [*Exit.*

Old Lib. Fifty thousand pounds! Ay, there's the rub. Fifty thousand pounds! In addition to my present estate, how useful it would enable a man to be! The interest of it would provide soup and Sunday schools for all the country.

Enter PARCHMENT, *a decrepid old Servant.*

Well, my gay old fellow, what's the news with you?

Parch. I have done every thing you have ordered, sir, and every thing Miss Lucretia ordered, so that I have been taking great pains for nothing at all; for what I had first done by your commands, was completely neutralized by what I afterwards did by hers.

Old Lib. Never mind.—We'll set all to rights again.—Tell that fellow who snared the hares in my grounds, that if I catch him, I'll make an example of him. Be very particular in looking out for him; and if he should be seen poaching again, why, tell the park-keeper to walk another way, and say nothing about it.

Parch. And what's to be done with old Cropley's cow? The bailiff has taken it for the rent of his cottage and garden.

Old Lib. Has he? a dog! That's quite right, you know; the law must be satisfied—It's a fine cow, so, d'ye hear, purchase it for me. Be sure to give as much money as he wants to make up, and when the cow's my own, why, I'll make old Cropley a present of it.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Counsellor Friendly, sir.

Old Lib. Counsellor Friendly! What, my old friend and fellow-student? Admit him directly.

[*Exit Servant.*

Parchment, go and do as I have told you—And if

my cousin should ask any thing about it, you may say——

Parch. The truth. I was forty years in your father's service, and never told one lie the whole time.

Enter FRIENDLY.

Friend. Mr Liberal, I rejoice to see you. Friend Parchment, how is it? [PARCHMENT *bows, and exit.*] An old servant that, and almost past his labour.

Old Lib. But he is so independent, he wou'dn't accept the least acknowledgment of long services, if I were not to allow him some employ; and he executes the trifling commissions I entrust to him, with as much pride as if he was a secretary of state. But to what do I owe the pleasure of this unexpected visit?

Friend. Business, business. I am executor to the will of one friend, who died in this neighbourhood, and am come to administer some solid comfort to another friend, who lies on the bed of sickness.

Old Lib. Has he any children?

Friend. The person I speak of is a female—She is a relict, and has one daughter.

Old Lib. You don't mean the widow Howard?

Friend. I certainly do.

Old Lib. She's very bad—I send every day to inquire about her health, and, as usual, yonder comes her dear, dutiful daughter to inform me of it.

Friend. (*Looking out.*) Truly a well-looking girl. Cou'dn't you leave us together a few moments.

Old Lib. Together! Eh!—Oh, I've no objection. I've some directions to give within, and will desire her to walk in here the while—But you mustn't make any pecuniary offers.—They are as proud as they are poor, and that I fear is saying a great deal. I rather wonder at it; for if the pleasure of receiving assistance does but half equal the glorious satisfac-

tion of giving, they must possess the greatest degree of self-denial who can refuse the enjoyment of it.

[*Exit.*

Friend. My friend is in the right—Those to whom we give may create compassion; but the man who possesses means to relieve, and adds will to the ability, is, indeed, an object highly to be envied.

Enter MARIAN.

Mar. Sir, I ask pardon; but Mr Liberal told me—

Friend. And he has told me too that your mother is sick, and you are kind to her.

Mar. What wou'd my heart be, if I were *not* kind to her?

Friend. Your heart wou'd be to blame; for if there is any thing which truly pictures to the mind the semblance of angels, it is, when we see the children of filial virtue ministering with affection to the necessities of a parent.

Mar. But I fear, sir, what little attentions I have been able to pay my mother will not long avail her. She has had, in vain, every medical aid the country can afford; were she but in London——

Friend. Even here she may recover—Providence is every where.

Mar. But, sir, she dwells so fervently on the idea that a physician who formerly knew her could effect her release from pain, that, were he present, imagination alone might do much in favour of his prescriptions.

Friend. And this you formerly mentioned to a friend of mine, who met you in a fearful storm, fetching medicines for your mother, when the virtuous warmth of your heart preserved you from a tempest, which, to many of your sex, would have proved fatal.

Mar. And your friend—Ah, sir, he made me a promise, which I fear——

Friend. I am come to answer for the goodness of his intentions. Return to your mother, and say, that a friend from town, who is the messenger of good news, will shortly wait on her.

Mar. A friend! Pardon me; but should it—should it be the friend she wishes for—

Friend. If it should, it were dangerous to tell her so at first.

Mar. You are right, sir—I will be cautious. Yet do not be angry with me, if I say my mother's circumstances are not as when you might have known her formerly—And fearful of lessening the little she has to leave me, she would even deny herself the relief which might incur expence. Had I but the means to pay what your attendance may demand——

Friend. You mistake—I am no doctor; if I were, I would not deprive you of contributing thus nobly to a mother's welfare. And were I able, I wou'd give a sum to be placed at interest, for the relief of indigent fathers and mothers, who maintain their own offspring, and of children like thee, who are dutiful to their parents. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A plain and neat Apartment.

MRS HOWARD *enters.*

Mrs How. How tediously do the moments creep along when Time carries Pain upon his wings! The hours of happiness, which have fled in rapid succession, seem now to look back and reproach the little account they were made of; so true it is that no good

appears in its real garb till we have suffered it to escape us.

Enter RACHEL, *an old Domestic.*

Rach. Ma'am, ma'am, he's coming. (*In a half whisper.*)

Mrs How. I thought your stay was long, Rachel. I hope we shall accomplish our aim before the return of my dear daughter. I wou'd'nt for worlds her tender solicitude should be augmented by a knowledge of our real situation.

Rach. Ah, madam, you are both so good, and it does so go to my heart, that you can't think the pleasure it gives me to see you weeping over one another.

Mrs How. Surely some of the vast fortune my uncle has heaped on others might have been left to us. For me, I am bending to my parent earth; but my sweet girl, rising like a beauteous flower, will catch each worldly eye, unguarded by a mother or a friend.

Rach. O, here's Mr Ephraim, madam.

Enter EPHRAIM.

Eph. (*To* MRS H.) I'm glad to see you can walk apoud, madam: I hope de young gentlewomans is well—I hope you are well, ma tear. (*To* RACHEL.)

Mrs How. I sent for you, sir, on business. The only property I acquired by the death of my uncle, Mr Rackrent, is what you see about me.

Eph. Ah! I knowed de old gentleman well enough. He was de besht at a pargain I ever met. He tried von time mit all his might to get de better of me; but some how or other von of us vas sheated, meder it vas him, or meder it vas myself, it vou'dn't be vorth ma vile to tell you.

Mrs How. As he left me all the moveables in a particular part of his house, those chests became mine

among the rest. (RACHEL *opens a door, discovering two boxes in a recess.)* I thought them worthless, as containing nothing but his clothes; but there are some suits among them so richly laced, that——

Eph. (*Examining them.*) Bless ma! it is very rich indeed. He never cou'dn't wear dese clothes himself. I never saw a coat a top of his back vorth twopence in ma life, except von, which I sould him maself for sevan shillans.

Mrs How. If you will fetch them away immediately, you can look over them at your leisure. I do not wish my daughter to be acquainted with this circumstance. In the evening bring me what you can best afford in return.

Eph. You forget I am a Jew. If you make it vorth ma vile, I shall buy dem; but if de pargain isn't made before your face, I cou'dn't give ma vord dat I shou'dn't have de best share of it.

Mrs How. You have the reputation of being honest.

Eph. So much de vorse—it's de ruin of all pusiness. I lose twenty per cent. by it every day.

Mrs How. If you are *not* honest, you can deceive me as easily here as by taking them away. I know their number, but not their value—And if you would serve me——

Eph. You take away my power to sheat you, because you put confidence a top of me. But why mus'n't your daughter know apoud it?

Mrs How. It wou'd wound her feelings to see me thus reduc'd. She often thinks she deceives me, by putting on a cheerful countenance when her heart is in an agony. I'wou'd do any thing to avoid adding to what she feels.

Eph. (*Apart.*) And so de moder and de daughter do all dey can to sheat von anoder. I didn't tink nobody but a Jew could be guilty of such a ting.

Mrs How. Your fair dealing in the disposal of my

other property entitles you to my good opinion. But will you examine those articles now?

Eph. I won't examine; I can guess pretty vell vat I can do. I will give you de moniesh now, and I shall come ven your daughter is out, and fetch something vat I can put 'em in. Bless me, de young lady is coming—put dem avay—put dem avay!

Enter MARIAN.

Mar. My dear mother, you look quite well to-day. Ah! Mr Ephraim!

Eph. How d'ye do, miss? I vas only doing some pusiness mit your mamma, my dear. Here, ma good madam, it wou'dn't be vorth ma vile to give no more as dis. (*Apart to* MRS HOWARD, *offering a bank-note.*)

Mrs How. This! 'tis a mistake—here is too much, sir.

Eph. Keep it, I tell you. If you speak anoder vord, I'll tell all apoud it.—Good day, ma good ladies. Dear, dear, vat a pity dese people shou'dn't be Jews—it wou'd den be vorth ma vile to love dem dearly; but, as it is, none but a Christian moder wou'd tink of sheating her own shild. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

Rach. Well-a-daisy! that's a good-natur'd old soul! Ah! if he was but one of us.

Mar. Why, is he *not* one of us?

Rach. What, he? A Jew! Why, miss, they are not, no, not even Christians.

Mrs How. Certainly not, Rachel; but they are men.

Rach. True, ma'am; but not like us. My poor, dear husband used to say they were fit for nothing, but to lend money, wear long beards, and buy bad shillings.

Mrs How. But, Rachel, you shou'd recollect, that if the Christians didn't furnish, by their extravagance, the ground of Jewish usury, the sons of Israel wou'd be more respected.

Rach. Ah, I dare say what you tell me is right.—

Dear me! a Jew one of us! Bless us, how a body may live and learn! [*Exit muttering.*

Mar. I am truly happy to see you in such spirits. You were yesterday so low.

Mrs How. Rest and sweet dreams have made the alteration. But you have watch'd me without intermission, so long, that shou'd your own health be the sacrifice, the restoration of mine wou'd make poor amends.

Mar. But, mother, since I saw you, I have found a friend.

Mrs How. A friend, child!

Mar. Yes; he will be here presently. He is a delightful man, and if ever I could think of loving any body besides you, it would be—dear, dear, I never thought of asking his name—But he says he has such good news——

Mrs How. Good news! What can it be? For thy sake, my child, the bare idea gives me pleasure.

Mar. And, indeed, you cannot conceive the pleasure I feel at seeing your eyes sparkle once more with their wonted lustre.

Mrs How. Nor can any but a mother experience the rapture which causes these eyes to flow with love, gratitude, and pride, at the attentions of a dutiful and virtuous daughter. [*Exit, led in by* MARIAN.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at an Inn.

FRANK LIBERAL *and* MILDMAY.

F. Lib. My dear Charles, welcome most sincerely to my native village—The obligations you could so ill afford to lay me under when in town, shall here be as far repaid as the intrinsic worth of mere coin will admit; for their *real* value, I must ever be your debtor.

Mild. You are determined not to be outdone on the score of acknowledgment.

F. Lib. Nor you on that of diffidence. And yet, when, through my foolish extravagance, my companions derided and forsook me, you stood boldly forward, and forfeited your pretensions to it for ever, for daring to countenance a poor devil, cut by the rest of his acquaintance.

Mild. You speak of this too often, forgetting that *you* stood *my* friend on many occasions, and now mean, by introducing me to your father, to lay the foundation of my future prospects.

F. Lib. And a worthy old gentleman you'll find him—if he has one foible, it takes its rise from a most amiable source; for the future good of his children, he submits rather too implicitly to the caprice of a

female cousin and counsellor, who is more absolute than the master of a full ferry-boat, or the landlord of the only inn in a village.—But why so melancholy, Charles?

Mild. I am uneasy on account of the sweet girl I so happily protected from the rustic violence of that booby squire.—She refuses to write to or see me; and, what is more extraordinary, I have met the squire himself, since my arrival here.

F. Lib. What fear of him?

Mild. Exasperated at my interfering between him and his brutal gallantry, I learn that he has purchased a bond of mine; and his following me here sufficiently explains his intentions.

F. Lib. Believe me you are among friends, who will study to provide a remedy.

Enter Landlord.

Aha! My worthy host, how fares it?

Land. My *young* squire, and *old* friend, welcome home, and welcome to my house, an hundred, ay, a thousand times!

F. Lib. Thank you—This is Mr Mildmay, who, as a friend of mine, must expect every attention from you.

Land. And he shall have it too.—Sir, I'm proud to see you under my roof. Mr Liberal there has been my benefactor—I'm not asham'd to say it.—He lent me money when I was poor—helped me up when I was down—and when it slips my memory——

F. Lib. Spare your professions, and tell us the news—Is all right at the Hall? Any thing pleasant? Is my father quite well, or has the old lady got the gout?

Land. Your good father is as well as ever, and I believe the old lady has more command than ever, for she has sent for a sweetheart from London for your sister Miss Fanny; one Squire Chace—I'm sure it's none of the old gentleman's doing.

Mild. Squire Chace!

Land. Chevy Chace, esquire, of Hunter's Hall; he's just arrived with a whole bevy of grooms, and now lodges in my house.

F. Lib. So, so! I wish my sister joy of her bargain.

Land. He's rather noisy, or so.

Mild. A troublesome, boisterous fellow, fond of giving the view-holla, to prove what strength of sound his lungs derive from the emptiness of his head!

Land. The very man, I'm sure, your honour. But though his head may be empty, his pockets are full, brimful, Mr Liberal, and that's every thing, you know.

F. Lib. Not with me. Egad! if this is the case, we must lose no time. Come, Charles, let us prepare to visit the mansion—And if I can help it, neither the squire's pockets nor his head shall find their way into our family, depend on't. [*Exeunt.*

Land. (*Calling* FRANK *back.*) Mr Liberal, I beg pardon, but you know there is a small matter of cash between you and me—Two hundred pounds, I think—I didn't expect your return so suddenly, and am rather unprovided.

F. Lib. No apology—I confess I had some hopes of your being able to return it. I shou'd blush to intrude on my father's liberality, when the carelessness of my past conduct has so little claim to it.

Land. Ah! you're a worthy—a good young man—You talk exactly like your father—You're the very moral of him.

F. Lib. I know nothing about that, Mr Doublechalk; but I know, that if there are two characters worse than the generality, they are, the debtor who possesses means of payment and withholds them, and the creditor who tears the blessings of liberty from an honest man, only because his inclination to do justice outweighs his ability. [*Exit.*

Land. (*Obsequiously bowing, and following him to the door.*) There goes one we may safely set down

for a blockhead. His father is so fond of him, he may do just whatever he pleases, and instead of making his advantage, he gets more and more out of favour every day, by doing and saying what is right and honest, as he calls it—It would be an ill action for me to refund money to one who so little knows the value of it.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. The young lady from the cottage wants to see you, sir.

Land. Young lady! Oh, what—Bid her come in. [*Exit Waiter.*

Young lady indeed! Miss Marian, I suppose, as they call her. I wonder what poor people have to do with pretty names! More excuses about money, I warrant.

Enter MARIAN.

So—I'm glad to see you—You've kept your word at last; you've brought the rent, of course, and here's the receipt. You see I expected you.

Mar. Your kindness, in waiting so long, has, indeed, been great, and I come——

Land. To pay me, of course.

Mar. Ah! no—to entreat a little further patience—My mother's returning health——

Land. If my money depends on that, I may wait till doomsday.

Mar. She is much better, sir—Do not, by your impatience, occasion a relapse;—had you a parent rising gradually from the brink of death, what wou'd you think of those, who, with unfeeling hand, wou'd plunge her down into the opening grave!

Land. Why, as to that, it's——but what signifies talking to *you*? I'll go to your mother—hear the true state of the case, and learn what I have to trust to.

Mar. Stay, sir; whatever may be your determination, do not acquaint my mother with it—To quiet

her mind, I have been obliged to keep her in ignorance of what passes—To this I owe the amendment of her health—As that increases, she will have more power to endure and to arrange every thing.

Land. That's very clever—and so she knows nothing at all about this business?

Mar. To what end shou'd I have added to her sufferings, by relating what I have happily conceal'd? Heaven knows, nothing could have supported *me*, but the delightful pride of standing a willing shield between the arrows of calamity and an honour'd parent.

Land. I tell you I will go—I won't say any thing harsh to the old lady. You know I'm good natur'd enough when people pay me as they ought.

Mar. Pray, sir, for pity's sake, forbear! (*Seizes his hand passionately.*)

Re-enter FRANK.

F. Lib. My old friend, I forgot to say that—Hey! by Heavens, the very charming girl I saw once before—in tears too! May I venture to inquire——

Land. You'd better not—it's a trifle—the young woman only—there, there, go home.—I'll consider on't. (*To* MARIAN.)

Mar. And you will spare my mother?

F. Lib. (*Respectfully.*) You may not immediately recollect me, madam, but you once entrusted me with a commission, which I hope was executed to your satisfaction. If I can now be of use to you, pray command me.—I only regret that so much sweetness and beauty in distress will take away all pretensions to merit, in my best efforts to do you service.

Land. No occasion—no occasion, squire—it's only——

Mar. Sir, we are poor, but not dishonest. This gentleman is our landlord—he fears our intentions to do him justice, and—pardon me, I had forgot, that, to a stranger, this cannot be interesting.

Land. True, you're right—I'll tell the story myself.

F. Lib. (*Stopping his mouth.*) No, you won't, while there's one present who can tell it so much better. Pray, madam, do me the honour to proceed—This gentleman is my particular friend—We are on such familiar terms, that, should he interrupt you any more, I'm sure he'll not be offended if I keep his mouth shut in spite of his teeth.

Mar. I have made him a request, which his humanity will incline him to attend to. And it is more proper I shou'd owe his compliance to the influence of that virtue, than to that of any gentleman, however kindly meant, or generously exerted. [*Exit.*

F. Lib. Did you hear her, old Icicle? I begin to comprehend this business.

Land. Why, I'm sure your honour's not angry. I am hurt at not having money to pay you; and, if I was a little severe, it was all on your account.

F. Lib. I understand—You mean to say your heart is naturally soft, and my patience impressed it with so much gratitude, that you was uneasy till you repaid me.

Land. Exactly so—you see how it was.—But you have so much penetration—I thought it my duty to get my own, entirely out of justice to you.

F. Lib. A good example. Now, sir, I think it *my* duty to get *my* own, entirely out of justice to *you*. So, d'ye hear, pay me instantly down the two hundred pounds I lent *you* in your necessity, or take the consequence.

Land. Why, surely you wou'dn't expect——

F. Lib. I didn't expect that any one bearing the form of man wou'd experience the offices of liberality, without learning at the same time to bestow them on others. Benevolence is not our own—'tis lent from Heaven, on the condition of extending its effects to our neighbours, and he who spreads it widest, does most honour to his commission.

Land. Umph!—As to the two hundred pounds, I shall speak to your father. I don't think he will be much pleased at your parting with so large a sum; nor will he be angry with me for taking it, to prevent a worse use being made of it, had it remained with you.

F. Lib. That's your *real* opinion?

Land. It is, *upon my honour.*

F. Lib. Now you shall know mine—upon *my* honour. With regard to myself, I expect my money—I must be paid; and that you may not complain for want of time, I give you a quarter of an hour to get it ready in. As to my father, I know him so well, that were you only to go to him, and tell the simple truth, he'd kick *you* out of the house, for daring to come into it, and *me* after you, for having befriended such a miserly old hypocrite. [*Exit.*

Land. Mighty pretty! how am I to raise the ready?—The money from the cottage I will have, if it's only to vex the young squire—That will go but a little way; and for the rest, let me see, there's Ephraim the Jew, perhaps he would—A sad old rogue too—but never mind; money I want—and for money there's so many who wou'dn't mind going to old Harry himself, that——(*Turning round, sees* EPHRAIM, *who enters a little before.*)

Eph. Did you vant me, ma good sir?—I heard you talk apoud ma name just now.

Land. Yes; I was speaking of the devil, just as you enter'd.

Eph. I hope I didn't interrupt you mit none of your friends?

Land. No, no—You call'd in the old way, I suppose—on the look-out for business?

Eph. I can't help it, Mr Doublechalk; I was born so, and I cou'dn't live if I had no pesiness in the world.

Land. Ay, ay; you drank in trade with your mother's milk.

Eph. Na, ma friend, I never had a drop of it—Ma poor moder died when I wash'n't a month old; and brother Moses carried me apoud in his pasket, along mit de rest of de shleeve puttons and shealing wax, vat he sould among the people.

Land. Indeed!

Eph. It's true, indeed—and venever I cried out mit a noise, he gave me the cushtomers' money to play mid, becaush he knowed vat I cou'dn't never be quiet mitout it.

Land. So, so—you learnt the art of multiplication without going to school, I warrant?

Eph. I vent to school a top of de Change, and St Paul's, and Leicester Fields—Ma task vas to get all vat I cou'd, and I never vas out in ma life.

Land. But you did'nt get all your money by slippers and candied lemon-peel?

Eph. I began mit little, but I took care of it—'Tis de great secret in ma trade; and dere's many of ma tribe keeps a coach, vat was first set a running upon *rollers.*

Land. The country-folks say you are a good, civil, kind-hearted man, and have been known to give money to the poor: You couldn't learn that among your own people—I don't mean to affront you; but you know there's a great many rogues among them, nobody denies that.

Eph. Vell—you vou'dn't keep all de rogueries to yourself, vou'd you, Mr Doublechalk? If I have any goodiess apoud me, I didn't learn it out of de Jews, noder out of de Christians—It was part of de shtock in trade given me from a better world, and if I don't put it out to lawful interest, I shall wrong the property of my employer.

Land. Well, then, suppose I wanted two hundred pounds, wou'd you lend them me?

Eph. Two hundred pounds! why, it's worth a shillan a-piece to see such a sum.

Land. Come, no joking—My note, interest, and premium are all you want, I'm sure—I know I must come down a little—so, wait a moment, and you shall have my terms upon a stamp immediately. [*Exit.*

Eph. Shtop—shtop! Dear, dear, de people dink vat a Jew is made of money—Besides, I don't like him a bit, and I von't lend him a farthing.

Sq. (*Sings without.*) Old Towler—dash way! Yoecks!

Eph. Pless ma heart! Who is Old Towler, vat de gentleman is making so much noise apoud, I wonder?

Enter SQUIRE CHACE.

Sq. Yoicks! Doublechalk! Waiter! Where the devil are ye all? And what sort of game have you got here? What sport, eh, old gentleman?

Eph. I hav'n't got no shport, sir—I only minds ma pusiness.

Sq. Well, clear the road—I expect a gentleman here, and mus'n't be seen in such company.

Eph. Ven you came in, I expected a gentleman myself, but I vas disappointed.

Sq. If you dare open your lips to me, I'll call my hounds, grooms, and whippers-in, to teach you the respect due from such reptiles as you to their betters.

Eph. Don't, ma dear sir—I'm frighten'd out of ma senses at a *puppy*, and if you bring de whole pack—

Sq. (*Smacking his whip.*) What, you old badger, did you call me a puppy? (*Drives him up into a corner.*)

Eph. Dear me, you hurt ma—Murder! if you knock me mid your whip, I can't bear it, I tell you.—Mr Doublechalk! de gentleman will kill ma.

Enter MILDMAY.

Mild. I've lost Frank somewhere—What's the

matter here? For shame, sir! I beg pardon: but you are really degrading yourself by such conduct.

Sq. (*Turns round to* MIDDMAY.) And, pray, who are you? What, my bully from town, the saucy champion of boarding-school misses!

Mild. I wou'dn't offend, but I believe you know, sir, that when once angry, I endeavour to supply my want of words with more effective arguments. (*Shaking his cane.*)

Eph. Py cod, I vish he'd knock him down.—— (*Aside.*)

Sq. You cane a gentleman!

Mild. When a man, born to the inheritance and opportunities of a gentleman, is afflicted with the mania of imitating helpers and stable-boys, it is only in unison with his assumed plan he *can* be chastised, and a cane or a horse-whip are the most appropriate implements.

Sq. I gave you credit for your looking big when a pretty girl was in the case; because you might cast a sheep's eye at a fine woman and a fortune; but there's nothing to be got here, unless you'd borrow money at fifty per *shent.*

Eph. (*Coming out of the corner.*) Well, if he did, I'd lend it him without any per *shent* at all.

(*Squire threatens;* EPHRAIM *runs back again.*)

Mild. You are unworthy my notice; but, as we may probably meet in a family where I am as solicitous to deserve as to obtain patronage, I wou'd advise you to keep some guard upon your insolence, and spare me from degrading myself in the presence of my friends, so far as to enforce my opinions with the weight of an arm you are already acquainted with. [*Exit.*

Sq. Was ever any gentleman of landed property treated in this manner? Stables and dog-kennels, truly! I'll do for him: he forgets I have his bond.—

And you, Mr Black Muzzle, your friend will get little by you, I believe.

Eph. I don't vant nobody to get any thing by *me*.

Sq. I've a bit of paper here in my pocket shall send him to the county jail—Tell him that—And what's more, it shall too, I promise him. [*Exit.*

Eph. (*Calling after him.*) Well, and I've got a bit of paper in my pocket, vat can pull him out again, if I like it.

Sq. (*Returning.*) What say you, mongrel?

Eph. Noting at all, sir—I only shpeak to de landlord—Dear, I wish de oder gentlemans wou'd come back, and talk to him a little more. I never was fond of fighting maself, and de only reason vat I can give is, dat whoever gets most by it is always de greatest loser in de end. [*Exit.*

Sq. A gentleman to be treated in this manner indeed!

Enter JOHN GROUSE.

John. I ax pardon, sir—but did you see ought of old Doublechalk?

Sq. No, sir, I did not see *ought* of him—I want him myself—Go you, and look for him.

John. Nay, nay, I moant do that—I've gotten t'rent to pay o' my little farm, ready for him—'tweant do to run after folk wi' money at these times—It's here all ready, and he may look for me, an' he likes.

Sq. What, you are a tenant of his?

John. I am, sir, because he's my landlord.

Sq. And a precious landlord he is!—He seems to be as attentive to his guests as his tenants.

John. Why, sir, it's 'tway wi' these chaps, I reckon. He was but waiter here a bit since—he war civil enough then; but now he's gain'd a deal of brass, and lost all his good manners, he sets himsel up for a gentleman.

Sq. By the by, who was that pretty girl I saw

with him a little while ago—Do you know of any sly little fair one he has in his eye?

John. It cou'dn't, for sure, be Black Betty, t' chamber-maid, you mean?

Sq. Black Betty! I tell you it was an angel.

John. An angel! I ne'er saw one at this house. Yet Miss Marian, fra'twood cottage, comes here sometimes when she lacks wine for her sick mother, and that makes her look more like one, than even that bonny face of her'n.

Sq. Ah! It's she I mean—I see you understand a beautiful face.

John. Why, as to that, sir, we Yorkshiremen are reckoned pratty good judges of women and horses.

Sq. This girl is without friends, you say?

John. She mut ha' plenty an she wou'd—but they ax nought of nobody. Squire Liberal, at the Hall, wou'd do a great deal for 'em, if the ou'd lady, his cousin, wou'd let him; but shew's a cross-grained toad, and ould Doublechalk told her that I said so, and Ise turn'd off from being game-keeper—but I know the squire's my friend at bottom, so I never heed it.

Sq. Could you put me in a way to see this girl?

John. Why, if you doant keep your eyes shut, you may put *yoursel* i' 'tway.

Sq. Ay; but I mean, you cou'd take a letter?

John. Nay, I know nought about letters—they na but bring a poor man into trouble; besides, I can't read 'em when they're written.

Enter Landlord.

Land. There is a stamp'd receipt for the money, friend Ephraim, and a premium of——

John. (*Taking it.*) Vary well—Four pounds three shillings and two-pence; it's all right to a halfpenny. (*Giving money.*)

Land. Right!—What's right? Why, that receipt is for two hundred and twenty pounds.

John. Why, is't?

Land. Yes; and an obligation to return it.

John. Nay, there's no obligation to return it, as I know on. (*Reading.*) Why, 'tis two hundred and twenty pounds, sure enough.

Sq. I thought you cou'dn't read.

John. Why, not much; but I understand grammar a bit.

Sq. You, grammar!

John. Why, yees, sir: I pay my rent, and that's grammar, an't it? There be three parts of speech, pounds, shillings, and pence, and he that knows how to get 'em is no bad scholar at last.

Land. Yes; but there's no scholarship in keeping my property.

John. I want none o' thy property—give me my own receipt, and here's thine again. You went tattling o' what I said up to t' Hall; you made me lose my place; and you may take back your dirty bit of a farm for your pains.—Squire has given me a better; so there's grammar for *thee.* [*Exit.*

Land. Why, but, John, John Grouse, I say——

Sq. Never mind him, but get me a bailiff directly; I must have that Mildmay arrested in the first place, and then I've a commission to entrust you with, shall be the making of you; for I've game in view will admit of no lost time, and is worth spending a fortune in pursuit of. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Inside of JOHN GROUSE'S *Cottage. The Door opens towards a Wood.*

Enter JOHN *and* PARCHMENT.

John. What, and so he says he'll always be good to me, in spite of the old lady? Why, now, that's vary kind on him. I like him so well, that I think I cou'd go all over t'world to do ought for him. Well, but thou'll ha' a drop o' drink? a sup o' yeal, ou'd lad, weant thee?

Parch. No, no, I thank ye. I have business in hand. Besides, there seems to be a storm brewing. —Fare thee well.

John. I mun away to work too. I ha' gotten a foine pig to kill.—I hope his worship will accept of some puddings. Bless his heart! he can eat a homely meal as well as a poorer man.

Parch. And so he can; ha! ha! ha! I've seen him, after a long ride, take away the children's bread and butter, on purpose to give them something for it; ha! ha! ha!

John. Ha! ha! ha! only think now, that of all trades, so good a man should have been bred a law-

yer, and thee his clerk! Thou moant mind my jokes; but I've oft been puzzled to account for it—You lawyer folks are so cunning.

Parch. Very cunning; and hardly one of them that isn't as keen as a Yorkshireman.—You mus'n't mind my jokes, you know, ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

John. Ha! ha! ha! Well, go thy ways—thou'rt a funny ould man, ha! ha! ha! It gets very dark and cloudy; I think there'll be some thunner flashes come down afore long. My dame, I warrant, has gotten into some house on t' road. I wonder where shew's put my great knife: t' pig will never get kill'd an' I doant find it.

Enter FRIENDLY, *through door.*

Friend. Pardon my intrusion, friend. I'm looking for the house of the widow Howard, and I have missed the way. [*Rain and hail heard.*

John. Why, when 'trains a bit o'er I'll go wi' you, sir. I' th' mean time, if you'll sit you down till the weather's fairer, you'll be heart'ly welcome. My mistress, shew's gone to market, childer are all at school, and there's nobody left but mysel to take care o' the house.

Friend. Thank ye, thank ye, friend. Your cottage is pleasant, though lonely.

John. Yees, sir; we live tolerably well. We have no folk but our ownselves and a lodger, who is sometimes here, and sometimes there, and sometimes—nowhere.—I should like the man vary well, but he's a Jew; and one don't care to have o'er much to do wi' such folk, thou knows.

Friend. (*Aside.*) A Jew and a Yorkshireman—pretty companions! [*Rain heard again.*

John. How 'train comes down! And see thee, here comes ould Ephraim, like a soak'd sop in a pint o' yeal.

Enter EPHRAIM.

Eph. Pless me heart! it rains all the vorld so as de flood vas come again. Sir, your sarvant. How do you do, sir? Dere me, who is dis? Dere is monish up stairs. De gentleman looks like a lawyer, and I never cou'd like dose people in all my life.—— (*Aside.*)

John. Pray sit you down, sir. Mr Ephraim, you'd better doff your wet clothes, while I get some drink for you and stranger.

Friend. (*Sits close to the door.*) I will sit near the door; for though the rain falls heavy, it is sweet to snuff up the scent of the newly-refreshed herbs and flowers.

Eph. (*Apart to* JOHN.) Pless me, Mr Grouse, dere is your pig so fright'ned at de storms, and is running apoud, and grunting mit his nose, for all de vorld so he vas out of his senses.

John. O, true; I'd forgot him. I'll be wi' you again directly. [*Exit.*

Eph. De gentlemans is sleepy. Dere's nothing I dislike my landlord for but his being so fond of pork. I always buy it of him when I can, that it may not be eat in de house, and because I get great deal monish by selling it some where else. Pless me! I stand talking here ven I'm so vet, that if I catch cold, it vill ruin me to buy a doctor for making me yell again. [*Exit up a staircase.*

Friend. (*Looking at his watch.*) I shall be too late at the widow's. I don't much like the appearance of my host; but to seem suspicious, is to court danger. (*Rains.*) The storm increases.—The trees, which bend before it, and are washed by the rain, may aptly be compared to man, who bows to misfortune, while the tears bedew his cheeks; but, possessing patience, he bows but to rise again, and the tears he

lets fall serve to enliven the spring of happiness which follows.

(*During the above speech he is playing with his watch, which he involuntarily lays on the table near him.*)

Enter JOHN.

John. Eh! my guest ha' dropt in a nap, I think—I moant waken him. I ha' catched that plaguy pig at last, however. (*Calls at the foot of the staircase.*) Maister Ephraim! Maister Ephraim!

(FRIENDLY *attentively listening, and occasionally assuming the appearance of sleep.*)

Eph. (*Above.*) I come, ma friend.

John. Speak softly—wisht, lad! wisht!

Eph. (*Coming down in another coat.*) 'Pless ma! vat is it you vant?

John. Why, the ou'd one's safe at last. Thou mun come and help me to hould him, or I shall never be able to kill him quietly. (FRIENDLY *starts.*

Eph. Dear me, you know I don't like it; it goes against ma conscience.

John. Nay, then, I'll do it mysel. I gotten a rare knife here, (*Whets it;*) if you'll no but just come, and——

Eph. I tell you vat, Mr Grouse, I vill go your half in de profit, but I vill not have a hand in the death of him—It is against my laws, I tell you.

(FRIENDLY, *much agitated, gradually gets the door open, and steals softly out, unobserved.*)

John. Well, happen the gentleman will for once lend a hand. (*Turns round, and misses* FRIENDLY.) Why, he's gone.—He mought ha' staid to say thank ye for your shelter, afore he stole out o' the house.

Eph. Stole! Dear me, I hope he didn't shteal noting out of de house.

John. Steal! Noa; I don't think he wou'd do that,

nowther.—He said he was in a hurry; and see, he has left his watch behind him.

Eph. Dear me, the gentleman must not lose his vatch. Vhich vay did he go? You must run after him—'tis a good vatch—make haste. (*Exit* JOHN.) Now I'll go up stairs, and see dat all is right. It is de only day vat I have put my monish here. De house used to be safe. I have been here often, and stayed very long, but I never saw any more rogues in de place than my landlord and myself in all my life.

[*Exit up the staircase.*

SCENE II.

A Landscape.

Enter MARIAN.

Mar. The storm has abated. What can have kept the gentleman? My poor mother will relapse into low spirits again, and I shall be so unhappy. Ah, thank Heaven, here he comes! Good man! conscious of his delay, and unwilling to give pain, I declare he is running to meet me!

Enter FRIENDLY, *out of breath.*

My dear sir, why fatigue yourself thus?—Were not the happiness of my mother so precious to me, I had rather you had staid where you were, than thus endanger your health.

Friend. Had I staid any longer where I was, the safety of my life would have been more uncertain than even that of your mother.

Mar. Your life, sir?

Friend. Figure to yourself a Jew of most vile aspect, and a tall raw-bon'd Yorkshireman, with a knife in his hand, ready to——Let us be gone, for he is even following me!

Mar. (*Looking out.*) Why, that, my dear sir, is only——

John. (*Without.*) Stop, sir, stop.

Friend. If I do, I'll be hang'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter JOHN, *running, with the watch in one hand and the knife in the other.*

John. Whew! what a run!—He'll neither stop nor listen. I'll e'en gi' it up; and yet if I had a hare in view, I shou'dn't be so easily flung out.—Dom, I'll have t'other try; for a good-natured action is better worth following than all the game i' th' county—so here goes.

SCENE III.

An Apartment in OLD LIBERAL'S *House.*

Enter MISS LIBERAL *and* FANNY.

Miss Lib. Well, child, I protest I think you have improv'd vastly. Had my cousin's notions been indulg'd, he'd have made you as unfit for fashionable life as he is himself.

Fan. Nay, now, ma'am, you musn't speak against my papa; he may be a little old-fashion'd, but he's always so good to me, that I can't find in my heart to think otherwise than well of him.

Miss Lib. Good to you!—Yes, he has been so—he confided you to my care, and that alone shou'd

certainly entitle him to your regards. In other respects, he has been more indulgent to the young man you call your brother.—He has suffer'd him to gallop about, Heaven knows where, and throw away money in learning to be useful, as he styles it.

Fan. Lud! I hope Frank is well. When I was here at our last vacation, we had the reputation of being the best players at battledore and shuttlecock in the whole county.

Miss Lib. Indeed!—and are these the accomplishments you study to acquire? Is this to be the fruit of my care and your education? Is this your attention to that grandeur of manner and dignified deportment which were always so dearly affected by the late Mr Rackrent?

Fan. Dear madam, why, where's the harm? Is not exercise both fashionable and healthy? Or wou'd you have me do nothing, but sit demure as Miss Primrose, who wou'dn't play at blind man's buff for the universe, abominates a reel or a lively dance, and never skips but when she's reading?

Enter OLD LIBERAL.

Old Lib. Fanny, my girl, how goes it? Why, you are grown as tall, and look as cheerful—Come, cousin, if all your plans succeed as well as your management of Frances, I may give you joy of 'em. I shall have Frank home to-day, to give an account of the last three months. I found him so clever in knowledge and management of the world, that, after permitting him to figure away in great style for the quarter before, I sent him this time to see how he cou'd make his way *without* money, as the best method of teaching him what to do *with* it.

Miss Lib. And who wou'd be so imprudent as to send youth into the world without money? Such a want is the prompter of all evil.

Old Lib. And money is the root of it,

Miss Lib. But, sir, a young man in London without money——

Old Lib. Is like a coach without horses, a watch without wheels, a ship without water, or a woman without a tongue.

Miss Lib. It would require a hundred tongues to preach sense into that miserable head of yours. Hav'n't I repeatedly told you, that to keep young people poor, is to make them mean-spirited and mischievous?

Old Lib. Yes, you did tell me so, for which reason I let Frank have *plenty* of money; then you were angry, call'd the lad extravagant, me an old fool, and money a passport to all manner of wickedness.

Miss Lib. I did so, sir; and now——

Old Lib. And now, because I kept him a little while without it, you're as bad t'other way. You make riches the *summum bonum*, and youth the only time for possessing them.

Fan. Nay, my dear father, and my dear madam, I'm sure, after all, you are very often of the same opinion.

Old Lib. Yes, but, unfortunately, it's never at the same time.

Enter FRANK LIBERAL.

F. Lib. My dear sir, I pay my duty with respect and gratitude. I hope I have lost nothing, in my absence, of your good opinion, ma'am. And as for you, Miss Fanny, you look so well, and smile so sweetly, that, were I not kindly permitted to call you sister, I should be over head and ears in love in less time than it takes to tell you so.

Old Lib. Well said, Frank: want of money has taught you how to flatter.

Miss Lib. If it has render'd him a little more polite, 'tis less an evil than I imagined.

F. Lib. I hope most sincerely that the want of it

will never make me forget my own worth, nor the possession of it degrade me to overlook superior merit in another.

Old Lib. Frank, I have often told you that knowledge of the world was only to be acquired by practice—sent you into it well stock'd with money and advice, and then—what was the consequence?

F. Lib. To speak honestly, sir, the advice went further than the money. Indeed, till one was gone, I had no opportunity of putting the other in practice.

Old Lib. What, you found your way pleasant and easy? It's ever so with the rich: all manner of folly can be covered with a piece of thin paper; and nothing is better calculated to smooth the way than a rough guinea.

F. Lib. Faith, sir, I found it so exactly. But it was impossible to think myself wrong, while I had so many friends to tell me I was right. The balance was, however, quickly struck between wisdom and folly, and I soon found myself considerably *minus* to the former.

Miss Lib. When your money was all gone, what follow'd?

F. Lib. My friends, madam, of course. However, as it isn't my way to despond, I took heart of grace, and determined to shew the world how much I was above it, by returning to my father on the top of the heavy coach.

Old Lib. So you did; you told me you had lost all your money, and I bid you go back and look for it.

Miss Lib. Cousin, that was very wrong.

F. Lib. It has, however, madam, brought me to the knowledge of three persons, with each of whom an acquaintance is absolutely necessary to support life tolerably.

Fan. Lord, Frank! who are they

F. Lib. You shall hear. Being without cash, and in want of better company, a very short time introduced me to myself; a gentleman I was mighty fond of at first; but a little observation convinced me he was such a giddy, rattle-brain'd, eccentric animal, that I must ask pardon for having made him the theme of so much conversation.

Miss Lib. And to whom next did your poverty lead you?

F. Lib. To a wonder—a man of merit, modesty, and friendship: of merit sufficient to become the object of envy; of modesty enough to think it no more than his desert; of friendship to contradict me when I was rich, and take me by the hand when I was poor, and all others had forsaken me.

Old Lib. Where is he, Frank? How I do like that man, whoever he is! If he has a family, I'll bring up all his children; the boys shall go to India, the girls to boarding-school, and the little ones——

Miss Lib. (*Stopping his mouth.*) Cousin! cousin! you get worse and worse; I am impatient of your folly.

Fan. And I to hear who the third personage can be that Frank has to tell us of.

F. Lib. The third—yes, every way the third, positively, comparatively, and superlatively so. I have told you of myself, and no small favourite of mine, with all my oddities; I have told you of my friend—a man who would probably die for me; but there is yet another——

Fan. For whom, perhaps, you are dying at this moment.

F. Lib. But with whom I cou'd live till Time shou'd break his glass, lose every feather of his wings, and yield his scythe to the more powerful arms of Cupid.

Old Lib. Curse me if I didn't think so.

Miss Lib. And can you encourage such romantic nonsense?

Old Lib. I order'd him to speak freely. Come, sir, let us hear. But no love, no raptures, no descriptions of brilliant eyes, cherry lips, taper fingers, rosy cheeks, lily complexions, for I can't bear 'em, they put me into such a——Zounds! why don't you go on with your story?

F. Lib. Since I am not to describe her person, look around you, sir: you, madam, will forgive my saying that one beauty may sometimes put us in mind of another.

Miss Lib. (*Bridling.*) Go on, child; I am all attention.

Fan. And so am I.

F. Lib. Figure to yourself, sir——

Old Lib. I do; I see all you would say; I see——

Miss Lib. Silence, cousin. What can you possibly see worth talking of?

Old Lib. (*Bowing to her.*) Nothing at present.—But go on, Frank.

F. Lib. Figure to yourself, sir, one of the most tremendous storms of hail, rain, thunder, and lightning that ever rattled over our heads—the storm of this morning was nothing to it.

Old Lib. Why, I was thinking of a woman, and you tell me of a thunder-storm.—That's no allusion to my cousin, I hope.

F. Lib. It was a day, sir, in which, as Shakespeare says, I wou'dn't have turn'd my enemy's dog into the street. I, among others, took shelter in a cottage by the road-side, where I beheld a straw hat, and under it such a face!——Put sensibility into a pair of eyes, virtue into the tears which moisten'd two lovely cheeks, and if it doesn't put your hearts into a flutter, never believe me.

Old Lib. I do believe you, I do, so go on.

F. Lib. Her mother was ill. In this storm, so violent that no one, for money or entreaties, would venture out, did she at length sally from the door, to go three miles for a cooling medicine. I had most need of it, for my heart was in a flame. I had the pleasure to be her messenger. That done, I set off for London, and have appriz'd a worthy friend of hers of her mother's situation.

Old Lib. Why, it's the widow Howard you're telling us of. She has but lately come into our neighbourhood. Her uncle has left his fortune unaccountably away from her; and my cousin there has a principal share of it.

F. Lib. Indeed! I met with her again this morning.—Whereabouts did you say she lives?

Miss Lib. Wherever she lives, she can be no match for you. Her uncle was my particular friend. Disobedience to him, from both mother and daughter, occasion'd their loss of that fortune which is justly added to mine.

F. Lib. Nay, but, madam——

Miss Lib. If you and my cousin do not follow their example, you also will be gainers. Miss Fanny, come with me. I have something of particular moment to say to you, and a proposal to make, which it will be for the interest of you all to comply with.

[*Exit.*

F. Lib. Madam, I have already heard of this proposal.

Old Lib. Don't follow her, Frank; it will be of no use—After all, she means us well. But where is this friend of yours? I should like to see him.

F. Lib. I guess'd as much, sir, and took the liberty to invite him so far, that he is now in the next room, waiting the issue of my reception.—He is, however, so modest, so very diffident, that you must not form a judgment of his worth from a short interview.

Old Lib. I understand you: we'll not alarm him.

Modesty is like a rose, and the world is the weather to it—An unkind blight in the bud often turns its sweetness to——Zounds! come along, Frank; I was always a blockhead at a simile. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Another Apartment in the same House.

MILDMAY *discovered writing at a table.*

Mild. I have taken advantage of these waiting moments to write to my dear Fanny; and, after all, where is the use of it? She is, in point of fortune, so much above me; and this enemy of mine, this intolerable timidity, which I cannot shake off, is of itself enough to prevent my rising in the world. What is to be done? Perhaps Frank's introduction of me to his father, for the trifling services I have rendered him, may assist me, in spite of myself. My dress, I fear, will not recommend me. It will be thought a liberty, perhaps, that I have us'd these writing materials on so elegant a table. (*Goes to move them, and overturns the standish.*) 'Sdeath! how unfortunate! Some one is coming! How shall I extricate myself? I am over in the wrong! (*Wipes up the ink with his white handkerchief, which he immediately returns into his pocket.*)

Enter FANNY.

Fan. Ah! there, it's all out!—An odious proposal of marriage has blighted all my hopes, and now—— (*Sees* MILDMAY, *and screams.*) Ah!

Mild. (*Rises.*) My Fanny! why, how is it possible that I see you here; you, whom I left so distant?

Fan. Dear, dear, how my heart does flutter, and ——Reach me a chair, or I shall faint; or, stay, your arm will do as well.

Mild. But tell me by what strange accident do I behold you?

Fan. By an unaccountable circumstance, which happens to all boarding-school misses: they are sent to school, taught a great many pretty things, and then return home again: just so has it happened to Frances Liberal.

Mild. Why, Frank Liberal is my friend, and has brought me here on a visit to his father.

Fan. And Frances Liberal is his sister. He has given you such a character, and my father is so impatient to see you, that if you offer to tell him that you knew me at the boarding-school, that you sav'd me from that brutal country squire, and that I, fearful of consequences, refused to see you, conceal'd my name, and gave you the slip, he'd be so angry with me, or both of us, that perhaps we shou'd never see each other again.

Mild. But what consequences could you fear from the affection of a man who wou'd sacrifice life to be of service to you? It was accident brought us acquainted; but I owed to that accident so complete an insight to your heart and disposition, that though to lose you would be worse than death, yet never wou'd I accept that hand, if your real interest demanded its resignation.

Fan. Why, Charles, I have a female relation, on whom my father greatly depends. Whether my governess discovered any thing to inform her of, I know not, but she has just proposed the very man to me as a match, from whose insolence you generously released me.

Mild. How unfortunate! Can nothing be done? Your father will be more generous: tee will never permit such a sacrifice. Were it for our good, I

wou'dn't hesitate; but to give you to such a wretch ——Sooner than it shall happen, I swear upon this hand—(*Kneels, kisses her hand, just as* OLD LIBERAL, FRANK, *and* MISS LIBERAL *enter.*)

Old Lib. Why, zounds! if this be modesty, the devil's in't.

F. Lib. Mildmay! my friend! why, how, in the name of wonder, came this about?

Miss Lib. I am perfectly astonished! This, then, is the reason of your reluctance, madam?

Fan. Now do only let me explain.

Mild. Nay, 'tis I who ought to explain. Mr Liberal, there is no man can feel more on such an occasion, or——

Miss Lib. Or express his feelings with more unbecoming warmth to a young lady. Miss Liberal, go to your room; go, I say, and thank my clemency if I deign to speak to you when you quit it, which, till you are married, you shall never do. [*Exit* FANNY.] Cousin, I leave the dismission of that gentleman to you. A man of merit, modesty, and friendship, ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Old Lib. (*To* MILDMAY.) Ay, sir, my son describ'd you as an auctioneer does an estate—all excellence and utility, and I find you only fit to be knock'd down.

F. Lib. Pardon me, sir; it is to me he owes an explanation, which, I hope, for both our sakes, will not turn out to his dishonour. I have been proud of you, Charles, as my friend; have reported you in glowing colours to a parent it wou'd be infamy to deceive, and if you don't make good every tittle of my assertion, I'll—I'll——Zounds, Charles! why don't you speak?

Old Lib. His modesty won't let him.

Mild. (*With great hesitation.*) Appearances, gentlemen, nay, more than appearances, at present condemn me. Were I to relate the commencement of

my acquaintance with Miss Liberal, it wou'd look too much like speaking in my own behalf. But tho' no possible circumstance cou'd add to my present embarrassment, yet this I will say, (*Pulls out the inky handkerchief, and incautiously wipes his forehead with it,*) that tho' my conduct may wear the blackest appearance——

Old Lib. And this I will say, that if you talk till you are *black* in the face, I wou'dn't believe but what——Why, Frank, what the devil is he at now?

Mild. Sir, I owe myself at least thus much in justification, that notwithstanding the opinion you may have been pleas'd to form, my own reflections assure me——(FRANK *holds a pocket-glass to* MILDMAY'S *face; he looks astonished, recurs to his handkerchief, attempts in vain to speak, and runs out.*)

Old Lib. Why, he's out of his senses—stark staring mad! What the devil did he mean by that pye-ball'd pocket-handkerchief? I suppose it was to give proof of his insanity in black and white.

F. Lib. Ha! ha! ha!

Old Lib. Why then, if this is modesty, I'll be content to pass for the most impudent old fellow in existence. Get along, you puppy! What are you laughing at? I suppose you call that modesty.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

The Widow HOWARD'S.

Enter COUNSELLOR FRIENDLY *and* JOHN.

Friend. Well, my good fellow, for the care and trouble my whimsical mistake has given, perhaps this money will make amends. (*Gives silver.*)

John. Well, sir, I'll tak'd brass, to shew I bear no malice; but I hope another time you weant think so ill of a Yorkshireman. There be honest folk in all places; and though some be born i' Yorkshire, we munna be look'd on like Jews.

Enter EPHRAIM *and* RACHEL.

Eph. Vell, vat you talk apoud Jews? The Jews are mighty good sort of peoples, yet they are treated all de vorld so dey vas Turks and Mussulmans.

Rach. (*Shewing the trunks.*) There are the things, Mr Ephraim. You must make haste, for young mistress is coming.

Eph. Mr Grouse, be so goot as help ma to come out mit dis bundle of clothes. Dear me, dere's de gentlemans vat run avay from his vatch. How cou'd you be so frighten'd, sir?

Friend. I had evil thoughts, which I now repent of. But what is it you are removing, friend?

Eph. Some of de dead gentleman's clothes, vat I pought of de laty of de house. You don't dink vat I wou'd take away nobody's property but ma own?

Friend. Who was the dead gentleman, as you call him?

Eph. I believe it vas old Squire Rackrent. But I don't trouble myself mit noting but puying de clothes. I shou'd be happy if you vas dead, and I shou'd puy your clothes, if you like to sell it.

John. Come, ould Ephraim, I think thou'st gotten all right.—(*During the above speeches they have been taking the clothes from the trunk, and placing them in a large green bag, brought by* EPHRAIM *for the purpose.*)

Rach. Ay, ay, they are all right. This way out, Mr Jew gentleman.

(JOHN *and* EPHRAIM *take the bag between them.*)

Eph. Take care you don't break de bag, Mr Grouse. I wish you good bye, sir. You're very welcome to puy some of de clothes back again, if you like it.

[*Exeunt* JOHN *and* EPHRAIM, RACHEL *assisting.*

Friend. I am sorry the widow shou'd thus hastily part with her uncle's property. I have seen and conversed with her, and am perhaps to blame for not having yet open'd my commission. But she comes, and by this time may be better prepar'd for it.

Enter MRS HOWARD *and* MARIAN.

My good Mrs Howard, I fear there has been some mistake with regard to your uncle's will. Did he leave no token of his once having been a friend to you?

Mrs How. He left me only the furniture you see.

Friend. And those chests among it.

Mrs How. He did.

Friend. He left *me* a letter, which, till this day, I was not to open, and which I will now read, as a part of his will.

Mar. Indeed!—Oh, sir, may I hear?

Friend. You may. (*Takes out a letter and reads.*) "As a further punishment to my niece, for the sin of disobedience, in marrying against my inclination, I have only left her some furniture and wearing apparel; but she will be punish'd no longer than till this informs her, that in the lining of the left hand pocket of my old drab-colour'd coat there is a reward for her past sufferings, and a token of my forgiveness."

Mrs How. Gracious Heaven! my daughter will be rewarded. (*Runs to the chest, opens it, misses the things, and, after a short pause, recollects herself.*) Oh! my child! can you forgive me? (*Sits down on the chest, and hides her face with her hands.*)

Mar. Mother! dear mother! why do you look so wildly?

Friend. I recollect: I may perhaps recover the loss. I'll go to the Jew's, and purchase back the clothes, which he cannot already have parted with, and which, but now, he offer'd to sell me. [*Exit.*

Mrs How. My child! my love! would I had strength to second our friend's exertions. The Jew, I believe, is honest; if not, the impatience of a mother will be the ruin of a child dearer to her than life.

Mar. And do you think Providence will forsake us? Oh no! a mother and a daughter, who love virtue and each other, will never be in want of a father and a friend. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

OLD LIBERAL'S.

Enter MISS LIBERAL *and* SQUIRE CHACE.

Miss Lib. But why despair, sir? In this house I am absolute. Her father has no objection; and the girl must have you.

Sq. So far we are on the right scent; but if we are to be cross'd by that hound Mildmay, we shall be thrown out at last.

Miss Lib. Why need you fear him? Didn't you tell me you had his bond for a thousand pounds? Isn't he poor, and hasn't he insulted you?

Sq. He has, a cur; but I've sent the staunch lads after him—the whippers-in. But what of that?—where's the odds? Lock him up in one prison, and miss in another, they come together at last.

Miss Lib. Indeed! but how?

Sq. How! You may as well ask a hare why it runs, or a harrier why it follows the hare: it's the nature on 'em, to be sure: why, I cou'dn't keep 'em apart myself. He knock'd me down like a calf, and ran off with the girl like a leveret.

Miss Lib. Well, well, she's coming; and till she consents, these apartments will be her prison.

Enter FANNY.

Sq. Ah! my dear miss, you know I love you. Say but you'll have me, and Chevy Chace, esquire, with all his goods, chattels, hunters, and hounds, are yours into the bargain.

Fan. I don't like hounds, and I'll have nothing to say to *you*.

Sq. No!—Only think of being mistress over one of the first manors in the world, patroness of the first hunt, toast of the first sportsmen, ranger of the first parks, and lady to the first squire in the county.

Miss Lib. Yes, or else think of living in this room, and your bed-chamber, which adjoins it; no liberty, and not a soul to talk to.

Sq. Ay, not a soul to talk to!—If that isn't enough to punish a woman, the devil's in't.

Miss Lib. Speak, miss: what's your determination?

Fan. I shall appeal to my father. I am sure he doesn't know of this; and if you offer to—to—lock me up, I'll run away as soon as ever I can. I will—(*Sobbing.*)

Miss Lib. We'll try that. Come, sir, leave her to herself; a little solitude will bring her to reason.

Sq. Nay, but, hang it, I don't much like to see the tears of a stag at the death, much more those of a pretty girl. Now, come, miss, I tell you what—if you take *me*, you may expect——(*Goes coaxingly to her; she slaps his face.*).

Fan. And if you take me, you may expect—*that!*—I won't have you—that's once for all.—And the man that's mean enough to plague a poor girl so unmercifully, deserves nothing better for his pains.

Sq. It's very well.—Odrotten! why, she hits like a hammer. And so I be to be knock'd down by one, and box'd by t'other, be I? I can't say much to you, seeing you are but a woman; but if I don't ferret out that Mr Mildmay, never trust me: I'll teach folk to strike their betters.

Miss Lib. I'm quite ashamed!—But I'll go to your father directly, and if he don't punish this insolence, I and my fortune are lost to him for ever. In the mean time, this key shall be your security. [*Exit.*

Fan. (*Jeeringly.*) Won't *you* stay with me, squire?

Sq. No, I won't; and if you don't learn to behave better next time, I don't know that I'll come again at all or no; so think well of it. My face do burn all one as a fire-brand. [*Exit.*

Fan. I wonder who the deuce wou'd have a rich cousin in a family? Here am I to be lock'd up, and us'd ill, because a cross old woman has a great deal of money. What shall I do? The windows are too high to jump from. Is there no way to escape—no kind fairy, like those I us'd to read of at school, to whisper means for my release?

Jen. (*From a closet.*) Ma'am! miss!

Fan. Mercy on me! how cou'd I have such wicked thoughts?

Jen. (*Comes forward.*) Don't be alarmed; it's only Jenny.

Fan. Jenny! what, Jenny! my dear Jenny! how did you come here?

Jen. Why, ma'am, I heard Miss Lucretia threaten to lock you up in this room; and as you have always been so good to me, I came up before her, unseen by any one, with this key in my pocket, which will open the door. I hid myself in the closet, and overheard all that pass'd, and will do any thing to help you out of the way till old master can be brought to reason; and I'm sure it won't be long first.

Fan. What a kind, charming girl! I wish Frank was here; I'm sure he'd assist us. O dear! do you know they talk of arresting poor Mr Mildmay?

Jen. Suppose you go to your father—and yet, if the old lady should have been with him, that would only discover us, and spoil all.

Fan. So it wou'd, Jenny. But, Jenny, I'll tell you what we'll do.—My brother has some uniform coats, that were made for a club, or society, or some such thing; they lie in the back room with his other clothes. Do you fetch 'em, and, for a frolic's sake,

we'll slip out into the village, merely to see what effect our absence will have on the old lady.

Jen. But I have a better thought still.

Fan. Ay, what is it?

Jen. My cousin is a volunteer: I'll borrow his dress, make him get me another, and in these we may march boldly off, without danger of suspicion.

Fan. No; do as I bid you at first.—Your plan will never do.

Jen. No, miss! why not?

Fan. Why not? I should never be able to respect myself, or any one else, who could put on the dress of a volunteer with an intention of running away in it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Inn.

Enter Landlord and SQUIRE CHACE.

Land. Well, sir, the bailiffs are on the look-out. Mildmay will soon be in your power.

Sq. Ay, but I'm thinking of a better prize. Miss Fanny is rather too strong in the wrist for *me*. I've seen one I like better too.—Such a girl! poor and pretty—the two most accommodating qualities in the world.

Land. But who, sir, who? You are so changeable and headstrong. You were quite taken a while ago with Miss Marian of the cottage, whom you saw here.

Sq. Why, that's the very girl I mean. As beautiful as an angel, but scornful as Lucifer. I've

laid a plan—you shall see the success of it, you dog, —I came down for a wife, and if I can't get *her*, I will have a mistress at any rate.

Land. But why carry her off, your honour?

Sq. Because she'll not go without. Marriage, where there's no money, will never do, and without marriage she'll never consent—So she must e'en be compelled to her own good.

Land. That's very considerate, your worship:—But what will the family at the Hall say to all this?

Sq. What care I what they say? It's my way to act first and think afterwards.—If the point turns out wrong, I try to think of something better—if right, it saves farther trouble, by being ready done to one's hands.

Enter Squire's Servant.

Serv. Every thing's as you ordered, sir—we only wait for you.

Sq. You sha'n't wait long then; I'll go with you —And hark ye, landlord, when they bring Mildmay, my lawyer will settle with you. [*Exit with Servant.*

Land. Very well, your honour.

Enter Bailiff.

Well, have you got him?

Bail. Not yet; our lads are on the look-out though, and I shall join them presently.

Land. You're so long about business. Why do you lose so much time, my friend?

Bail. Me! Lord, I never lose a moment. Just lay my hand so—(*Touching Landlord's shoulder*)—shew the writ, and—by the by, did you ever see one of our warrants?

Land. Plenty—often enough.

Bail. But not with your own name in it, mayhap.

Land. My own name indeed! What d'ye mean?

Bail. I mean that you're down here for the sum of two hundred pounds. You see I don't lose my time so much as you imagine.

Land. (*Reads.*) "At the suit of Francis Liberal, esquire:"—A villain!

Bail. That's always the way. Creditors are good fellows enough till they want their money, and then nothing's too bad for them. So, come—if you can't find bail among some of your customers, I must lock you up in your own bar, till Mildmay comes to keep you company.

Land. Nay, but listen with a little patience.

Bail. I tell you what, Master Doublechalk, I know you never listened in your life with patience to a poor debtor; so you must e'en take up with the same fare you gave to others.

Land. Vastly civil! But what can one expect from a bailiff?

Bail. That he does his duty—if every one else did the same, there wouldn't be half so much occasion for us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

An Apartment at OLD LIBERAL'S.

OLD LIBERAL *and* PARCHMENT, *meeting.*

Parch. Sir, your lady cousin is looking for you in a great passion. Something has made her angry, and every body is getting out of her way. Adod, I believe she's coming here.

Old Lib. Is she? Why then, stay a bit: I don't much care to be left alone with her—If it wasn't for the young ones, I would not put up with her temper

—But a good father is his children's steward, and shouldn't mind a little inconvenience, when it's for their good.

Enter MISS LIBERAL.

Miss Lib. Well, cousin, here are fine doings in the house; there has been neither peace, quietness, or satisfaction from the moment I set foot in it.

Old Lib. No more there has—I perfectly agree with you.

Miss Lib. And I, sir, as perfectly understand your sneer: But I shall not stay to be thus derided—Your daughter follows your example; your servants join in it; and I shouldn't wonder next if old Parchment there was ordered to make me his laughing-stock.

Parch. I never refused to do what I was ordered in my life, madam, so you needn't be angry with me; and I will not stay to be wrongfully entreated. [*Exit.*

Old Lib. Well, but tell me, cousin, what has my daughter done?

Miss Lib. She has refused to marry Squire Chace, one of the first matches in the county.

Old Lib. Has she? Why, who the devil asked her to have him?

Miss Lib. Who, sir? Why, I asked her—nay, I commanded her; and he begged, prayed, and entreated to no effect.

Old Lib. That was mighty condescending! And what did she say to him?

Miss Lib. Say! Why, she struck him—absolutely boxed his ears.

Old Lib. The devil she did! What a desperate baggage—My daughter box'd the squire—Oh! the spirited little hussy!

Miss Lib. Do you laugh, sir? I think it a very serious matter.

Old Lib. So do I, upon my soul.

Miss Lib. And what satisfaction is to be given the squire for such treatment?

Old Lib. Why, hasn't she given him enough already?

Miss Lib. Have the goodness, sir, to let me know what I am to understand by this kind of conversation?

Old Lib. If you don't know, I'll tell you. You have always confessed that your money was the reason why your will should be a law in this family—My children were to benefit by it—And for their sakes I permitted a foolish old woman to have her way.

Miss Lib. Sir, I will not stay another moment in the house.

Old Lib. Then you may go out of it. If you chuse to stay and make *me* the butt of your ill-natured whims, you've free leave; do it, and welcome; but my children are my own; they are my existence, my every thing, and their happiness shall not be made a sacrifice, for twenty times the paltry cash in your possession.

Miss Lib. I shall expire with rage.

Old Lib. Why don't you then? You may do what you please with me, only behave well to the young ones.

Miss Lib. And is it not behaving well, to endeavour to open their eyes to their own good?

Old Lib. But you should consider what is truly, and not seemingly for their good.—What's your quarrel with my daughter? Why, she won't *love* where you bid her; and how should she? The very request, much more a command, is as unreasonable as to bid a Laplander wear furs in the West Indies.

Miss Lib. So, so; I have given my time and anxiety to a fine purpose; but your ingratitude shall be paid with interest. Haven't I dedicated half my life to serve you?

Old Lib. And who asked you? But come, send

for my daughter. Let me hear her story, and I'll give fair judgment between you.

Miss Lib. No, sir. I shall submit to no such arbitration. Here is the key of her rooms, and with it I render up all further intentions for the good of a family so blind to its own interest.

Re-enter PARCHMENT.

Parch. Sir! Sir! Miss Fanny has run away, and left this letter for you.

Miss Lib. There, cousin, what say you now?

Old Lib. What do I say? Why, confound your system. Come along, old Parchment; muster the servants, and let us seek her directly.

Miss Lib. Hear me, sir!—If the late Mr Rackrent——

Old Lib. Rat Mr Rackrent—I hate his memory, and abhor his doctrines; his ill got property is as ill bequeathed—And I'll no more suffer my family to be in future imposed on by its influence, than I'll squeeze my tenants as he did, or debase their honest natures to fear a landlord, who, by kinder treatment, would merit and receive their gratitude. Out upon 't! Why do I stand talking to you all this while? Here, John! Gregory! [*Exit, followed by* PARCHMENT.

Miss Lib. I haven't patience—but no matter—I'll be even with them all. What is it to me what they do? I have no reason to be concerned—To be sure, there is some pleasure in governing; but for my part, I've so little desire for it, that—Oh! Oh! Oh! if they don't let me have my way I shall break my heart. (*As she is going,*)

Re-enter PARCHMENT.

Parch. Madam, I forgot to say that there is a report in the village that the Jew Ephraim, who bought some of the old squire's furniture, has found money concealed among it to a considerable amount.

[MISS LIBERAL, *who, at the beginning of* PARCHMENT'S *speech, has continued to cry, suddenly brightens up.*]

Miss. Lib. What, money! It belongs to me—every guinea belongs to me—I'll go to the Jew's this instant—he shall refund, and my half-witted cousin, till he comes to his senses, sha'n't be a penny the better for it. [*Exit.*

Parch. Bless my heart, what a vexatious thing it seems to be rich!—Now, money never troubles me; and if old Parchment was to live till he fretted about who was to be his heir, I verily believe he'd never die at all; ha, ha, ha! [*Exit, hobbling.*

SCENE V.

EPHRAIM'S *Apartment.*

EPHRAIM *discovered sitting with all the Clothes scattered loose about him, holding the Drab Coat in one hand, and a number of Bank-Notes in the other.*

Eph. No, no, I have looked all over, and dere is noting more to be found. These bills are vorth more as ten thousand pounds. Dear, dear, what a fine purchase! Let ma see—Vat vill it be vorth ma vile to do mit dem? It vill take a great deal of consideration.

F. Lib. (*Without.*) I'll find the way, I warrant.

Eph. Bless ma! somebody is coming: I must hide 'em all in a minute.

(*Puts the notes in his pocket, and throws all the clothes behind a curtain across a part of the room.*)

Enter FRANK.

F. Lib. Ah, old Benjamite, how is it with you, eh, my fine fellow?

Eph. It is petter mit me now than it was a little while ago. But hadn't you petter walk down stairs?

F. Lib. No, not I—my business won't detain me a moment. I know that, notwithstanding you occasionally lodge in this cottage, and are a very shabby looking sort of a gentleman, you have more money than most folks think.

Eph. I hope he doesn't suspect. (*Aside.*) Me moniesh! dear me, I'm so poor as nobody else in de parish. I haven't got a guinea in all de vorldt.

F. Lib. Very likely—but I want a thousand.

Eph. A thousand guineas!

F. Lib. Yes; or, what's of more consequence, a friend of mine wants them—is on the point of being arrested by a rascal; so let me have it, how, and upon what terms you like—only it must be directly.

Eph. Dear me, your father has plenty moniesh.

F. Lib. Yes, he has; and so much good nature, that I can't bear to be troublesome to him. If he was a little more crabbed, I should no more mind teazing him, than I shall kicking you down stairs, if you don't let me have the money this instant.

Eph. I'd better get rid of him before somebody comes to get de clothes again—Here, here, fill up dis bond—I always have one ready—Here is de money, and——

Miss Lib. (*Without.*) What a horrid staircase.

F. Lib. The old governess of my father and all his family. What can she want? If she sees me here, she'll ruin me.—Where can you put me? I'll hide in here. (*Goes to the curtain.*)

Eph. No, no—dere is someting.

F. Lib. Hold your tongue—don't speak of me for your ears—I must contrive to get away in spite of her

immediately, or I shall be too late with the money. (*Hides in the recess behind the curtain.*)

Eph. Vat de devil de people all vant, I vonder. I vish dey were at de devil.

Enter MISS LIBERAL.

How d'ye do, ma'am? I'm glad to see you.

Miss Lib. Mr Ephraim, I wait upon you, upon a business so particular——

Eph. Vell, madam, I have some pusiness myself.

Miss Lib. Sir, I shall not detain you. I have heard it reported that Mr Rackrent, who generously left me so much money, died possessed of much more, which was supposed to be concealed in some of his furniture.

Eph. Pless ma heart! I can't think he vou'd hide avay his money—And if he did, how could I help it, you know?

Miss Lib. True; but I believe you bought part of his furniture.

Eph. Yes; I bought all vat I could; but I hope dere vas none of de moniesh left among it.

Miss Lib. Why not?

Eph. Because vat I happened to sell it all again. Is dat all you please to vant?

Miss Lib. No, sir; I must make further inquiries —Besides, I understand it has been reported, through you, that I persuaded him to desert his niece, and forget her in his will.

Eph. Vell, I don't doubt it.

Miss Lib. Sir!

Eph. I don't doubt the report—I can say noting about the truth of it.

Miss Lib. But, sir, the old gentleman left me his money for the care I took of him, and the anxiety with which I watched the moment of his departure.

Eph. Yes, you vas mighty anxious apoud his departure.

Miss Lib. Poor dear man! were he here himself,

he would acknowledge it.—Never shall I forget him in his fine cut drab-coloured suit and flowing wig; a respectable remnant of the old court—the grace with which he walked into and out of a room—and then the style with which his picture was drawn, with his left hand elegantly placed on his hip, and the other in his bosom—Ah! were I once again to see him—I should expire with——Ah!

(*During the above speech,* FRANK *comes from behind the curtain, dress'd in the drab-coloured suit, as described, and stalks off, after making a formal bow to* MISS LIBERAL, *who screams, and falls on* EPHRAIM.)

Miss Lib. (*Recovering.*) It was his ghost—Did you not see him?

Eph. See him! Vy—vhat!—it's only ma friend, Mr——Dear me! I very near let all de cat come out of de bag at once.

Miss Lib. 'Twas he himself! What can it forebode? There is, there must be money concealed. Perhaps he is now going to point out the spot.

Eph. It vill be more petter if I follow him. I had not quite done mit de coat. (*Aside.*)

Miss Lib. Follow him! What, and leave me here alone. (*Pulls him back.*)—You sha'n't stir a foot without——

Enter COUNSELLOR FRIENDLY, *who stops* EPHRAIM.

Friend. No, you shall not stir till you sell me the drab-coloured suit you just purchased of my friend's widow.

Eph. Vell, let me go fetch it, I tell you.

Friend. You have it here; and but for the windings of this labyrinth you live in, I should have been here before you.

Eph. I tell you, ma friend, it is not here. You may look among de rest of 'em, and you vill not find it.

Miss Lib. Oh, Mr Friendly, such an alarming circumstance!

Eph. Yes, mighty alarming! Von man runs away mit ma goods, and de oder says vat I must stay behind, to sell it him.

Friend. If you do not produce the property, I would not be in your coat for a trifle.

Eph. Vell, but dere is a man in my coat already, and vat can I do?

Miss Lib. Did you meet no one on the stairs?

Friend. I *saw* nobody, for it is dark; but I was nearly overturned by some one who passed.

Eph. Vell, it vas Mr Frank, I tell you, mit ma coat.

Miss Lib. Mr Frank! Hark ye, Mr Ephraim, I shall make further inquiry into your conduct—And in the mean time I'll see what my hopeful cousin will say to his children now. To be made a jest of, truly! [*Exit.*

Eph. He has made a jest of me, I think.

Friend. You know, Ephraim, that there is money concealed in that suit, which I shall make you restore.

Eph. I tell you I pought de tings; and if dere is money, it is ma own.—Let ma go, sir—I am no dief—De law is mine as vell as yours—and if you dink it impossible a Jew can be honest, it may be because you find it a hard matter to be so yourself.

Friend. Would you withhold what belongs to the fatherless?

Eph. I have had children myself, and though dey never lived to be fatherless, dey taught me in deir life-time to respect de children of anoder.

Friend. And will you not listen to the widow?

Eph. You are no widow, and I will not listen—Ven you come to make me do good meder I vill or not, you take avay de merit of it. Go avay den—If dere is money to be found, I shall see vat is vorth ma

vile to do mit it. Ask your own conscience vat a lawyer vou'd call his duty.

Friend. Every honest lawyer knows that to perform his duty is his true interest.

Eph. And a Jew knows his interest as vell as a lawyer, or else the devil's in it! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Landscape, with a House at a little distance.

Enter MILDMAY.

Mild. Was ever an unfortunate being thus persecuted? The victim of suspicion on one side, and an implacable creditor on the other. I overheard the sheriff's officers inquiring for me, and which way to avoid them, without giving up all hopes of explanation with Frank Liberal and his father, I see at present no sort of prospect.

Enter FRANK, *in the old man's dress.*

F. Lib. Mildmay! Charles! What the deuce do you run for? I'm no sheriff's officer—Here, I've brought the means of quieting your fears.

Mild. Frank! Why, what masquerade frolic is this?

F. Lib. Never you mind. I have been to my old banker, borrowed a thousand, and—Yes, I have—I certainly have—(*Feeling in his pockets.*)

Mild. What, my dear friend?

F. Lib. Left it behind me. The devil fly away with all antiquated cousins, say I—I put on this coat to avoid her, and left my own in its place, with all the notes, which in my hurry I had stuffed into the pocket of it.

Mild. But surely you couldn't have meant so much generosity for me.

F. Lib. It's no matter what was meant, for now all's over, without some contrivance. Here—I have it—Take this coat and waistcoat, give me yours in exchange—I'll run back to the Jew's.—The bailiffs will never suspect you in that disguise.

Mild. There are some people now crossing that inclosure.

F. Lib. Then step here, behind these trees. The shade will make a pleasant dressing-room; and we sha'n't be the first who have taken umbrage at the sight of a sheriff's officer. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FANNY *and* JENNY *in men's clothes, dress'd alike, in blue coats with red collars.*

Fan. Well, Jenny, and what are we to do now?

Jen. Why, ma'am, we must make the best of our way to my mother's cottage: brother John shall run and see how things go on in our absence—And I'm sure when my old master finds that his cousin has forced you to run away, he'll give you your own terms to come back again.

Fan. Come then—Ah, we are watched. There are two men lurking behind those trees.

Jen. Yes, ma'am, and three more running down the hill on that side. Do you step into this house.

Fan. But upon what pretence?

Jen. Why, Lord, ma'am, a'n't you a woman in distress? And isn't that sufficient?

Fan. You forget that at present we pretend to be men.

Jen. Well then, we are men in distress, fearful of being arrested—Any thing.

Fan. And that will do purely; for when a poor fellow is trying to preserve his liberty, there are very few Englishmen would refuse to afford him shelter and assistance. [*Exit into house.*

Enter Bailiff and two Followers.

Bail. I've locked up the landlord, and now for Charles Mildmay, gent., at the suit of Chevy Chace, esquire,—Why, I'm sure I saw him but this moment —A blue coat and a red collar—What's to be done, lads?

1 *Fol.* Each go a different way, and let whoever catches him first give a whistle.

2 *Fol.* Then that will be I—I was always lucky at finding a shy bird.

1 *Fol.* You don't find him first, for a tankard with you.

Bail. I say, for a crown bowl of punch, the two losers to pay it between 'em.

1 *Fol.* Done! Done!

Bail. You take the lower road—*You* go that way, and I'll remain hereabout—And, d'ye hear, look out sharp, for it's a very little way to the next county.

1 *Fol.* What a thing it is, Master Touch, we can't follow a defendant if once he carries his shoulder into another shire! For my part, I'm an advocate for liberty, and thinks every bailiff ought to follow his profession wherever he can.

Bail. True: In some places there's nothing at all said about carrying a man to prison; but in this country they make such a fuss, that if a gentleman offi-

cer doesn't mind what he's at, ecod, he stands no bad chance of being clapt there himself.

[*Exit up the stage, the two followers on opposite sides.*

Enter FRANK, *in* MILDMAY'S *coat and waistcoat.*

F. Lib. (*As he enters.*) Stay where you are, my friend; I'll return in a few seconds, and then you will have no more fear of the bailiffs. (*Going.*)

Bail. (*Comes forward and interrupts him.*) Not so fast—I must keep you company.

F. Lib. I don't like keeping company, my friend. Nobody gets any thing by it.

Bail. Except gemmen of our profession. But come, I've nabbed you, and won the wager. I know you well enough—Squire Chace shewed you to me from the castle windows—And as sure as your name is Charles Mildmay, you must go with me. (*Whistles.*)

F. Lib. (*Stops him.*) Don't whistle—I shall make no resistance. I'm walking this way for the benefit of the air—It does me good.

Bail. Psha! nonsense! It will do you more good to pay your debts. Come along. (*Pulling him.*)

F. Lib. Now don't do that—It will bring on my old complaint.

Bail. Your old complaint!

F. Lib. Yes. You must know there are periods when I can't, for the life of me, resist an inclination to kick any body that says I must do what I don't like.

Bail. What! Will *you* kick *me?*

F. Lib. I can't help it—particularly, as it's your request. (*Kicks him; he whistles.*) Vastly well, friend! If a burr will stick to me, why, you know I must get rid of it.

Bail. Here, William! Fellows! Rescue!

[*Exit, kick'd off by* FRANK.

Enter MILDMAY, *in the old drab suit.*

Mild. I hope Frank won't stay long. These habiliments will at least secure me from being known till his return.

Enter FRIENDLY.

Friend. No where can I find the man who has taken the drab suit from Ephraim. Aha! Stop, friend; I must speak to you.

Mild. (*As an old man.*) Sir, what did you say? I'm rather deaf.

Friend. You can't impose on me, friend. That coat I remember to have been worn by a deceased friend of mine, and I know your design in putting it on.

Mild. The deuce you do! Then I have nothing but flight for it at last. [*Exit.*

Friend. And I have nothing to do but to follow. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Landscape, with a Road leading to a Wood.

Enter JOHN GROUSE.

John. There's some mischief a-foot, I reckon, wi' that Squire Chace—There war he and his gentleman, as they call him; they were talking of a chaise, and a nice job, and Miss Marian—Ecod, if they war to do any thing wrong to her, they mun be bad ones sure enough—I don't know what the law would say to me for leathering a squire, but as to his gentleman, I'd pay him enough; and if the squire was but

a gentleman, I'd knock one head against the t'other —Eh! marry, she's coming.

Enter MARIAN.

Mar. Ah, John! I'm glad to see you.

John. And so am I glad—And your mother will be glad, and Mr Frank, and the lawyer gentleman, and every body else but the squire.

Mar. Indeed! How so, John? (*Crossing him.*)

John. You moant go that way—there's plots upon your precious vartue—I'll be shot if there isn't. There be squires and gentlemen, and horses and chaises, all ready to devour you.

Mar. For Heaven's sake!—You alarm me.

John. That's what I want—and I'll alarm the whole place; for I know vary well thou'rt a good girl to thy dutiful mother, and wou'dn't like to be run away with against your will, though it were even by a squire.

Mar. Indeed you judge rightly. Hark! I hear footsteps—Will you protect me?

John. Whya—I don't know if it be manners for a poor man, like me, to protect a young lady; but I'll wage half a guinea, if ony squire touches you without leave, I'll bang his head for him.

Mar. I believe you; but there's no necessity to meet the danger—Shew me to my mother's—Ah, bless me, who are these?

John. Houd your noise—There's a little bit of a by-path i' t'wood—I made it myself last nutting-time.

Mar. I thank ye, my good fellow—my mother shall thank you too.

John. Come, come—never mind thy mother, but take care o' thy sen.

(*They retire;* JOHN *keeps in sight.*)

Enter two of the Squire's Servants.

1 *Serv.* (*As he enters.*) Wait there with the car-

riage. I wish the job were well over—It may prove more pleasant to master than to us.

2 *Serv.* Somebody watches us——Young man! young man! Why the plague don't you answer? (*To* JOHN.)

John. Why, there be more young men than me hereabouts—My name's John Grouse.

1 *Serv.* But did you see a young woman?

John. Yees, I seed a many.

2 *Serv.* Ay; but a young, handsome——

John. Why, Lord, I know—I'm in the secret. You belong to Squire Chace—Whisht! Whisht! I ha' gotten summit to tell you. (*Takes an arm of each, and brings 'em to the front.*) You're come to take Miss Marian to yonder chaise.

1 *Serv.* You suspect a little roguery, do you?

John. No, I suspect a great deal of roguery—I war sent by t' squire to lend a bit of a hand, and you were to give ma a guinea to drink his health.

1 *Serv.* He said he wou'd send more assistance. But while we stand chattering, she may be far enough off.

John. No, shew isn't far enough off yet—So hand out a guinea, or I won't help a bit.

2 *Serv.* I shall give no guinea without orders—Here's the squire himself; let him give it you.

Enter Squire.

Sq. Well, lads, is the game started? Stand close.

John. Under favour, sir, I did offer to help Miss Marian off, and these chaps refused to pay ma—You spoke to me about her to-day—I no' but axed a guinea, and I've a pretty good guess where shew is.

Sq. Here's a guinea, my boy—Well, where is she?

John. Why, I do think by this time, sir, shew's at whoame.

Sq. At home! No such thing—Why should you think so, bobby?

John. Why, sir, because I showed her t' nearest road, that's all.

Sq. You shew'd her—Return my money, and make amends, or——

John. Mends! Nay, there's no mends now, you know. I've gotn't a guinea, and things are well enough as they be—As to t' brass, I've earn'd it—And if a bad action deserves a guinea, a *good* one does at any rate. (*Goes up stage.*

Enter MISS LIBERAL.

Miss Lib. Squire, why do you loiter here? your mistress has eloped; but I've discovered her retreat, and if you make haste, may intercept her—I saw your chaise at the corner—Come, it will just do to put her into it—Your bringing her back to her father will do all his objections away at once.

Sq. I began to think I was thrown out at all quarters. But come, madam, shew me the game, and if I lose sight of it again, may my best hunter bring me in last at the death.

[*Exeunt Squire and* MISS LIBERAL.

John. Why, how the deuce can *she* know ought of Miss Marian?—They'll never find her that way, however—I'll just watch 'em though.—(*Steals off.*)

Enter OLD LIBERAL.

Old Lib. (*Agitated.*) No news of her! No tidings!—Who wou'd be plagu'd with *young* women that are pretty—*old* ones that are rich—or *any* that will have their own way?—I'm out of breath!—How angry shall I be when I find—No—Ha, ha, ha!—Find her!—I shall be so pleas'd, that I'll forgive her directly—I'll forgive every body but the squire, and my cousin, and——She didn't run away from *me*—'twas from them—And how do I know but it's all a trick, and that she has been *forced* to go?—Why was I born to love my children so well?—There's so much misery,

so much plague———I'll have no more, I'm determined.

Re-enter JOHN.

John. (*Looking back as he enters.*) They're gone t'wrong road—That oud woman's a fool, and t'squire's no better.

Old Lib. (*Turning short upon him.*) Squire! what! who!—Has he got her?

John. No, not yet—He hasn't gone t' right road to get her.

Old Lib. Is she out of his clutches?—If you know, tell me this instant.

John. Lend your ear—Shoo's at whoame.

Old Lib. At *whoame!*—Are you sure of it—Is she indeed?

John. On the word of an honest man.

Old Lib. (*Gives him money.*) Here, drink my health—A hussy! I knew she'd find her way home at last.

John. Shoo wou'dn't ha' found t'way, if I hadn't shewn her.

Old Lib. Indeed! and was that necessary to make her return?—Well, well, (*Hurt,*) she may go again if she likes. It wasn't I that lock'd her up—I was too fond of her, like a blockhead—I own it, and I'm ashamed of it.

John. Ay, ay, I thought you were too good a gentleman to be ashamed o' being fond of poor folk.

Old Lib. Poor!—Fellow, how dare you take such a liberty?—I'll leave her half my estate, and till then she shall live like a duchess.

John. Why, you must be fond indeed, to do so at your time o' life—You should be thinking of other matters—Consider your poor children.

Old Lib. What! (*Astonished.*)—What did you say?

John. Your worship has been kind to me, and I respect you—I should be sorry to see you lose your good name.

Old Lib. Why, you impudent vagabond—Lose my good name!—If you hadn't been the means of restoring my——but I won't believe it till I see her—I'll go and ask her directly. (*Going.*)

John. This way, your worship—you may soon be convinced.

Old Lib. Didn't you say she was at home?

John. To be sure I did, and I say so again.

Enter PARCHMENT.

Parch. Sir! sir! I have found her. Come with me—She is now waiting your pardon for her frolic.

Old Lib. Well, I'm going home to her—I know it.

Parch. She's not at home—She's afraid to go till she has seen you, which she expects to do at the widow Howard's.

John. I told him so—I told him she was at the widow Howard's.

Old Lib. *You* told me!—Mercy on us! You repeatedly assured me you had seen my daughter Fanny safe home, and called me an old fool for being fond of her. Did you, or did you not?

John. I'll take my Bible oath I never said a word
n't.

d Lib. Parchment, run for a constable, and while
the widow Howard's, do you take this fellow
fury.

y then, I'll be shot if I've seen your
she went to school—I was talking o'
you said you'd give her half your
ve and fondness.

im come within reach of my
u Yorkshire jackanapes.—
ou quite sure my daugh-

ship.

I'm deceived, you
t impudent rogue

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